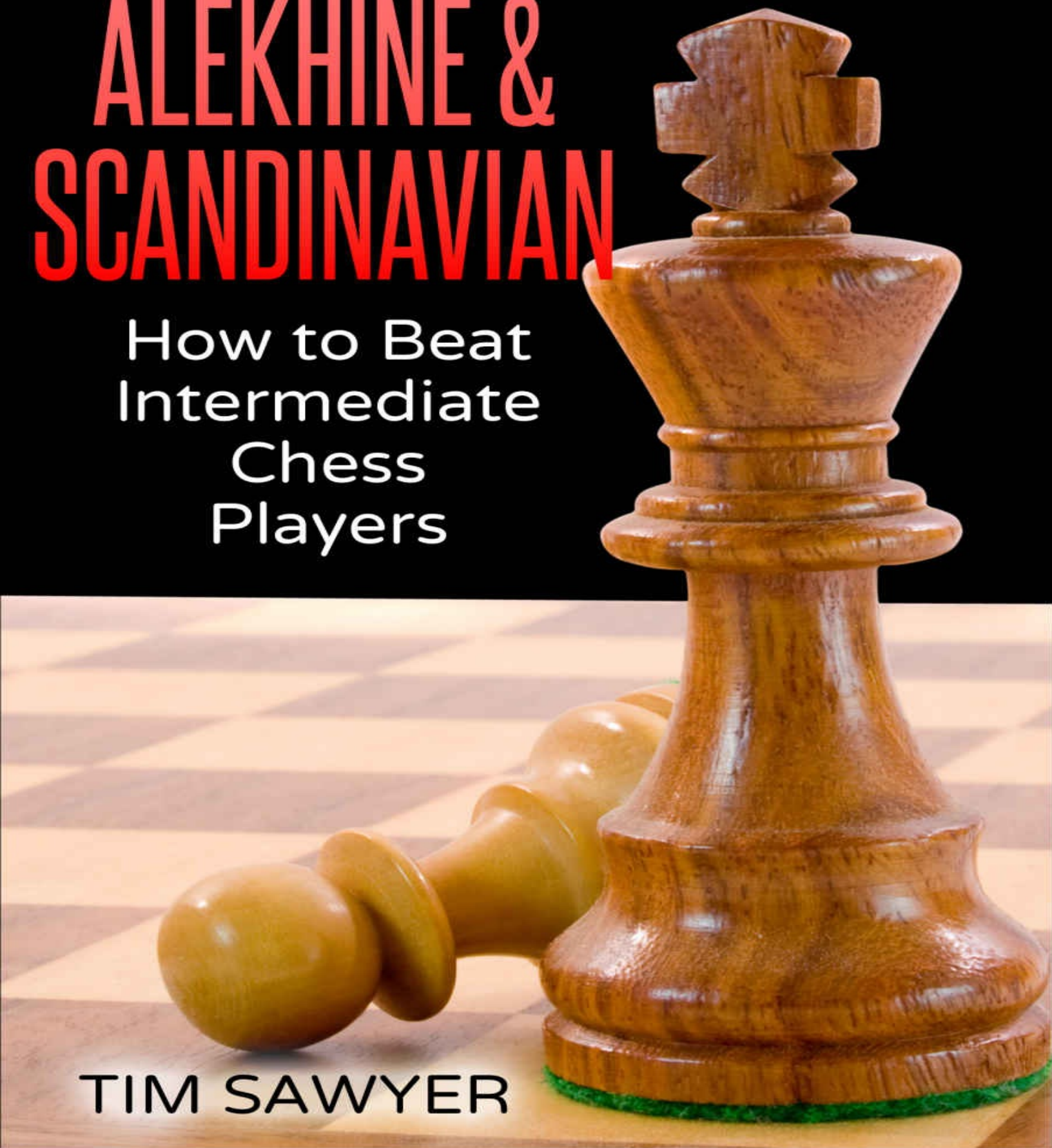
# CHESS STRATEGY

# ALEKHINE & SCANDINAVIAN

## How to Beat Intermediate Chess Players



TIM SAWYER

# Chess Strategy
# Alekhine & Scandinavian

# How to Beat Intermediate Chess Players

# Tim Sawyer

# Chess Strategy Alekhine & Scandinavian: How to Beat Intermediate Chess Players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**Before You Go**

# Introduction

This Alekhine Defence and Scandinavian Defence book shows how I win in chess openings that begin 1.e4 Nf6 and 1.e4 d5. While I face these with the White pieces, I also play them as Black. I tend to choose the Alekhine vs stronger players and the Scandinavian vs weaker ones.

I illustrate chess strategy from games I played vs random “Advanced” players as Guests on chess.com. The book has 34 games with 172 diagrams. I scored +34 -0 =0 in these 10-minute games. Opening theory and endgame knowledge help your play, but tactics win most games.

I use strategy for my comments to explain what’s going on. I follow any of these steps. 1. Describe the current position. 2. Imagine how to improve it. 3. Plan how to get there.

I pick a key position every few moves to make a comment. My plan is for you to browse through the book, look at the diagrams and read the comments with ease.

For those who prefer to read quickly, you can skim through the book from diagram to diagram. Note the change from the previous diagram and read any notes that interest you.

From time to time, I add a line of analysis. You may wish to work out some of those lines in your head, or just note that there was an alternative way to play and keep reading.

I played chess for 50 years. As a correspondence master and blitz master, my usual opponents were rated 1800 to 2400. My opponents here are often lower to intermediate.

I assume that you can read algebraic chess notation. The diagrams have White at the bottom of the board. Thank you for reading my books. I hope you enjoy this one!

# Chapter 1 – Alekhine 1.e4 Nf6

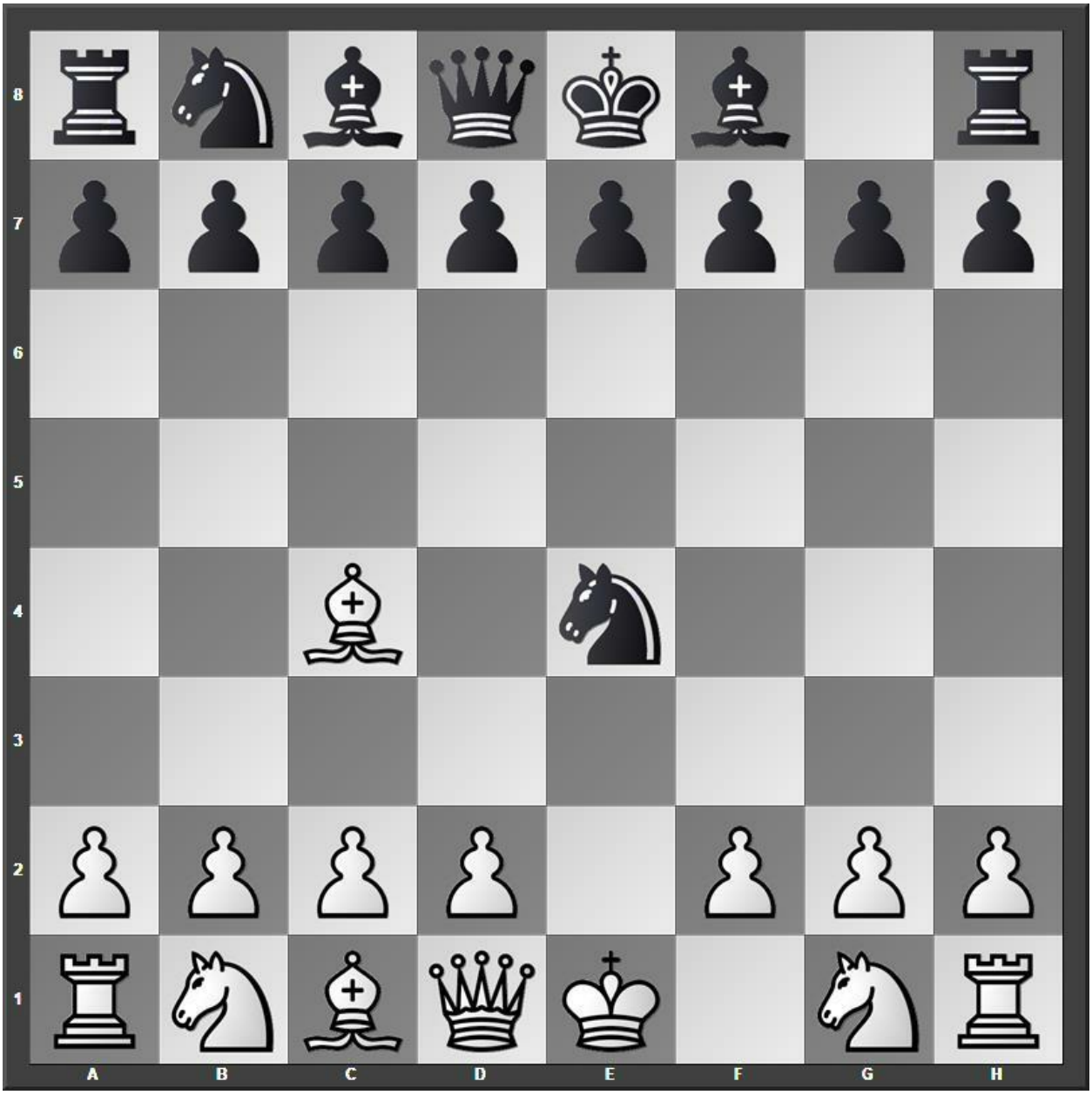
## Game 1 – B02 [2.Bc4 Nxe4 3.Bxf7+ Kxf7]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 06.10.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

I enjoy attacking the e4 pawn with my knight on move one. Black takes on some risk, but White's game is not easy.

**2.Bc4 Nxe4**



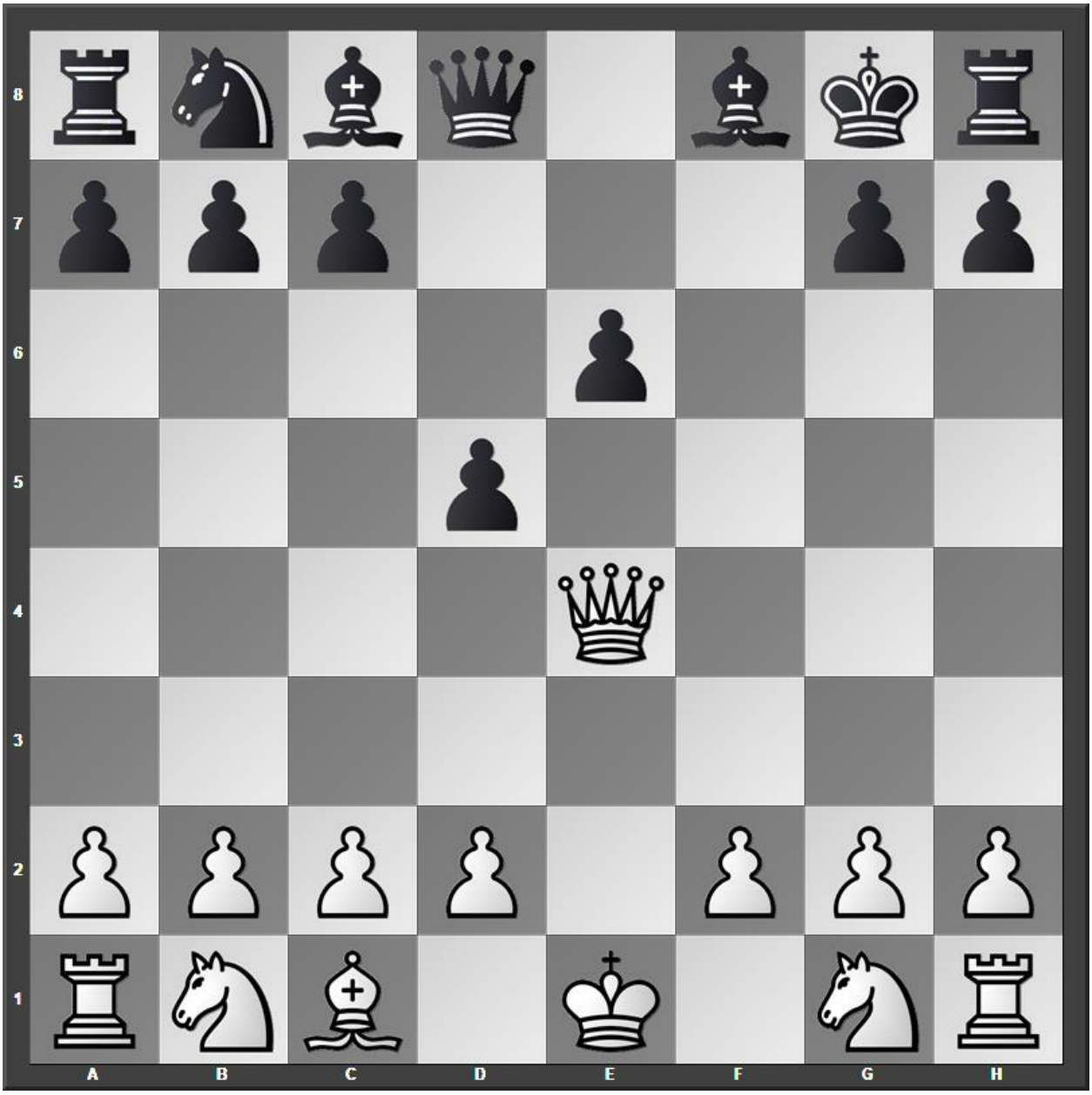
My opponent trades the e4 pawn for the f7 pawn. White regains the pawn with a practically forced combination.

**3.Bxf7+ Kxf7**

**4.Qh5+ Kg8**

**5.Qd5+ e6**

**6.Qxe4 d5**



Those choose this variation as White must feel that it's a good strategy. However, in my experience Black has two advanced center pawns with a healthy and active position.

**7.Qf3 Qf6**

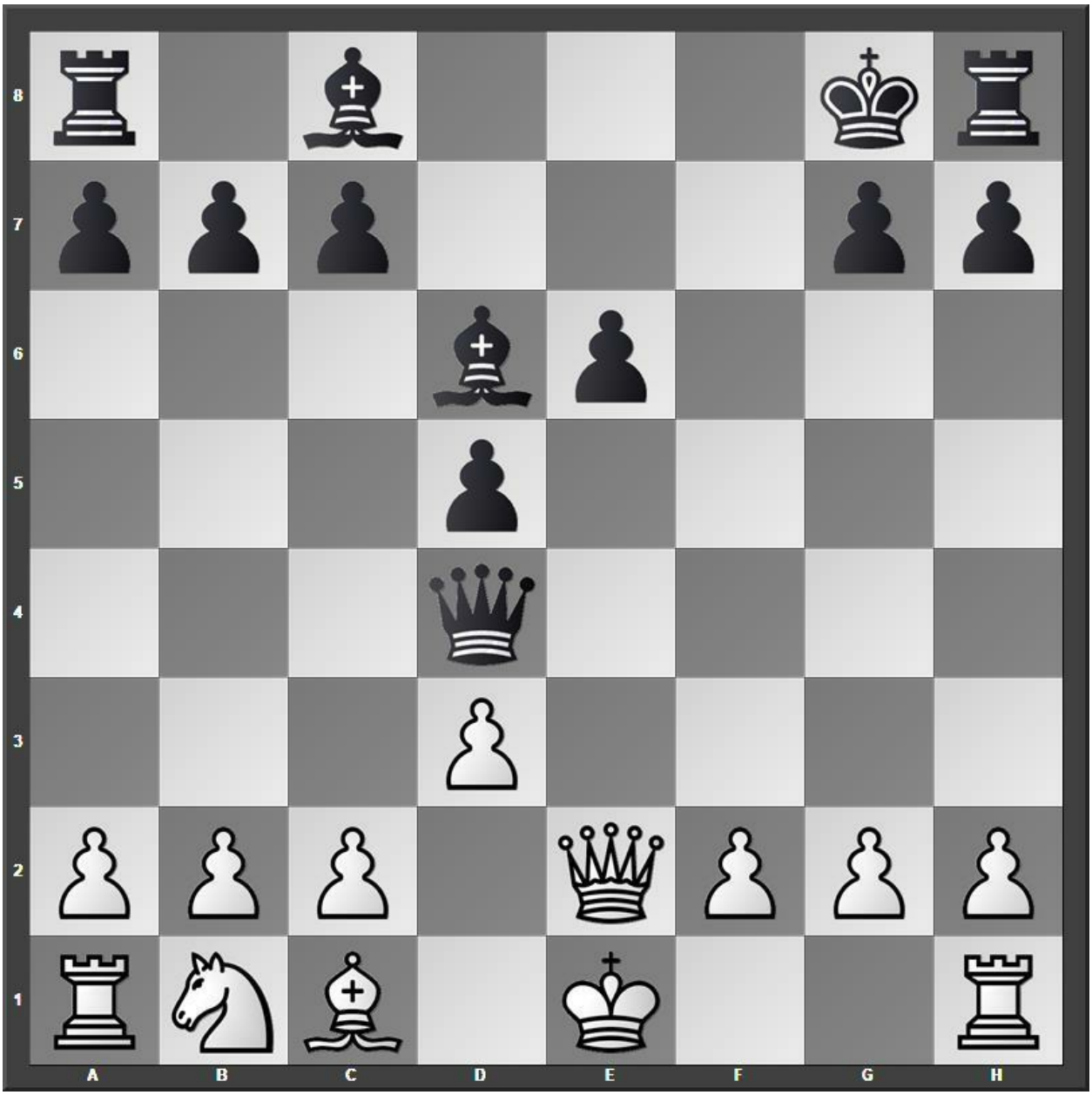
**8.Qe2 Nc6**

**9.Nf3 Bd6**

Probably stronger is 9...e5.

**10.d3 Nd4**

**11.Nxd4 Qxd4**

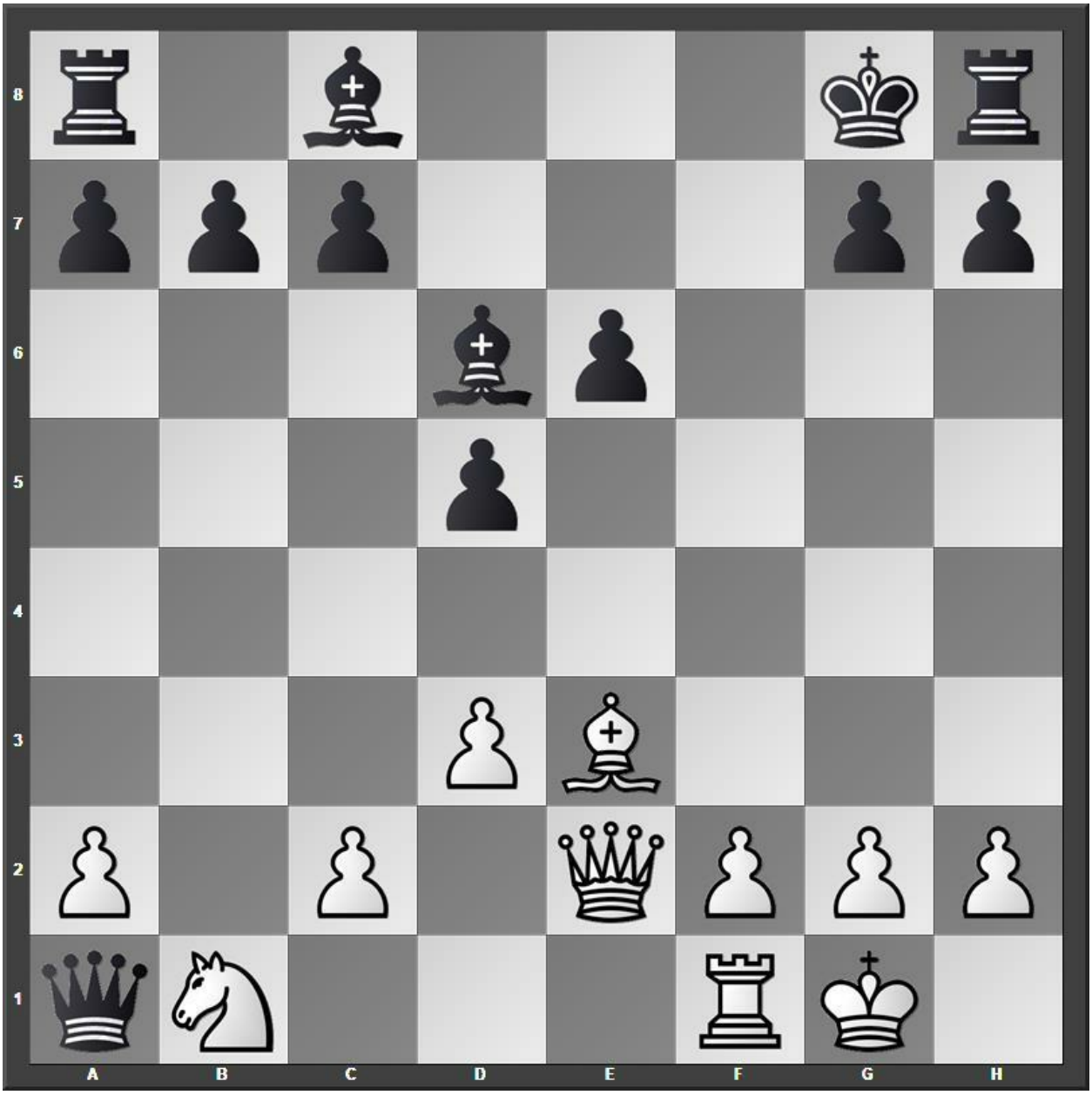


**12.Be3**

This loses material since it leaves b2 undefended. Better is 12.Nd2 e5 13.Nf3 Qg4 14.0–0 with equal chances.

**12...Qxb2**

**13.0–0 Qxa1**



**14.Nd2**

If White traps the queen 14.c3 b5 15.Bd4 b4 16.Na3 Qxf1+ 17.Kxf1 bxa3 Black has a bishop and two rooks for her.

**14...Qf6**

**15.f4 Bd7**

**16.Nf3 c5**

**17.Ne5 Bc6**

**18.Nxc6 bxc6**

**19.c3 h6**

**20.d4 c4**

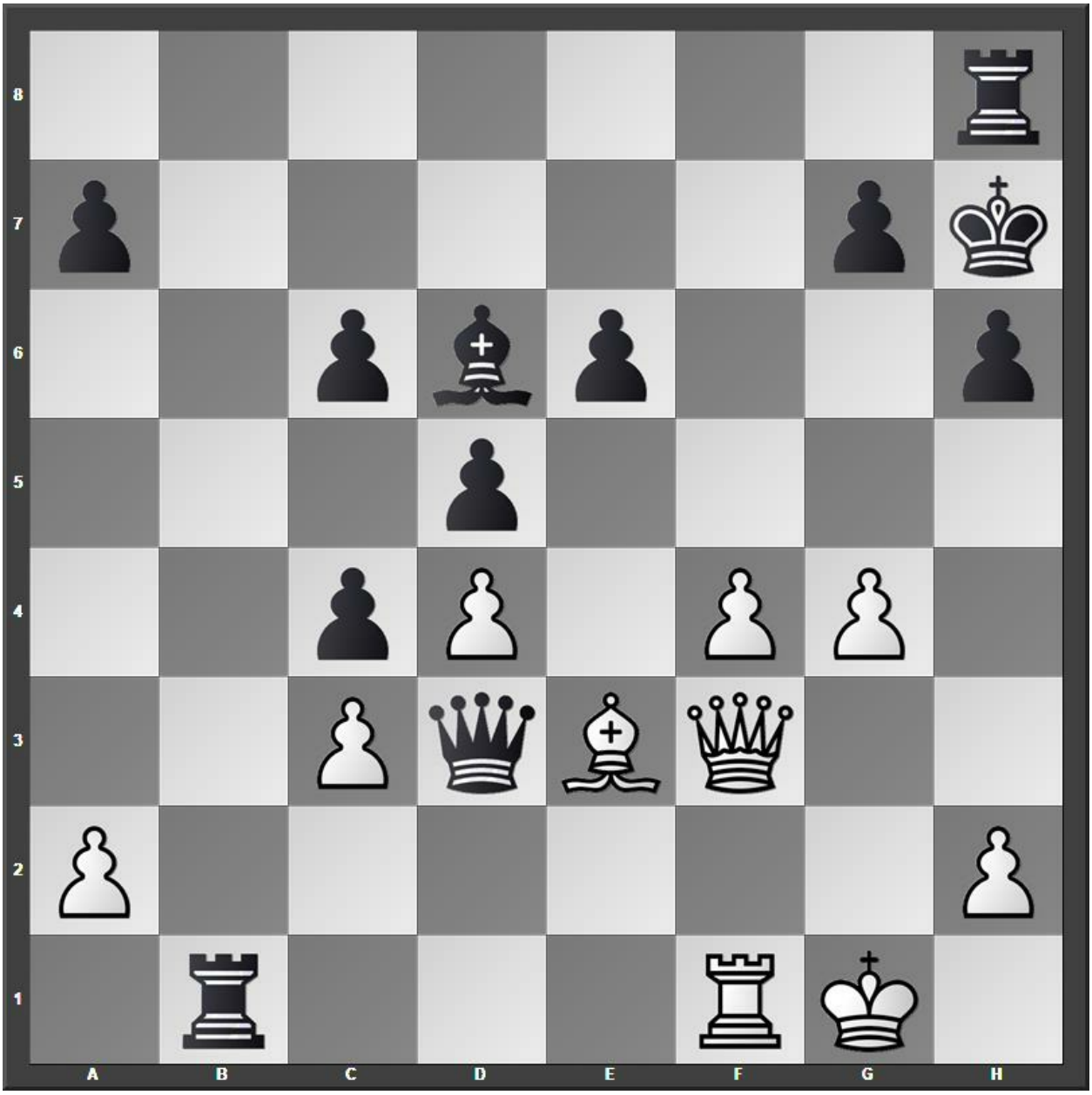
**21.Qb2 Kh7**

**22.Qb1+ Qf5**

**23.Qd1 Rab8**

**24.g4 Qd3**

**25.Qf3 Rb1**



Because Black has an extra rook, it’s time to simplify.

**26.Rxb1 Qxb1+**

**27.Kg2 Qe4**

**28.h4 Rb8**

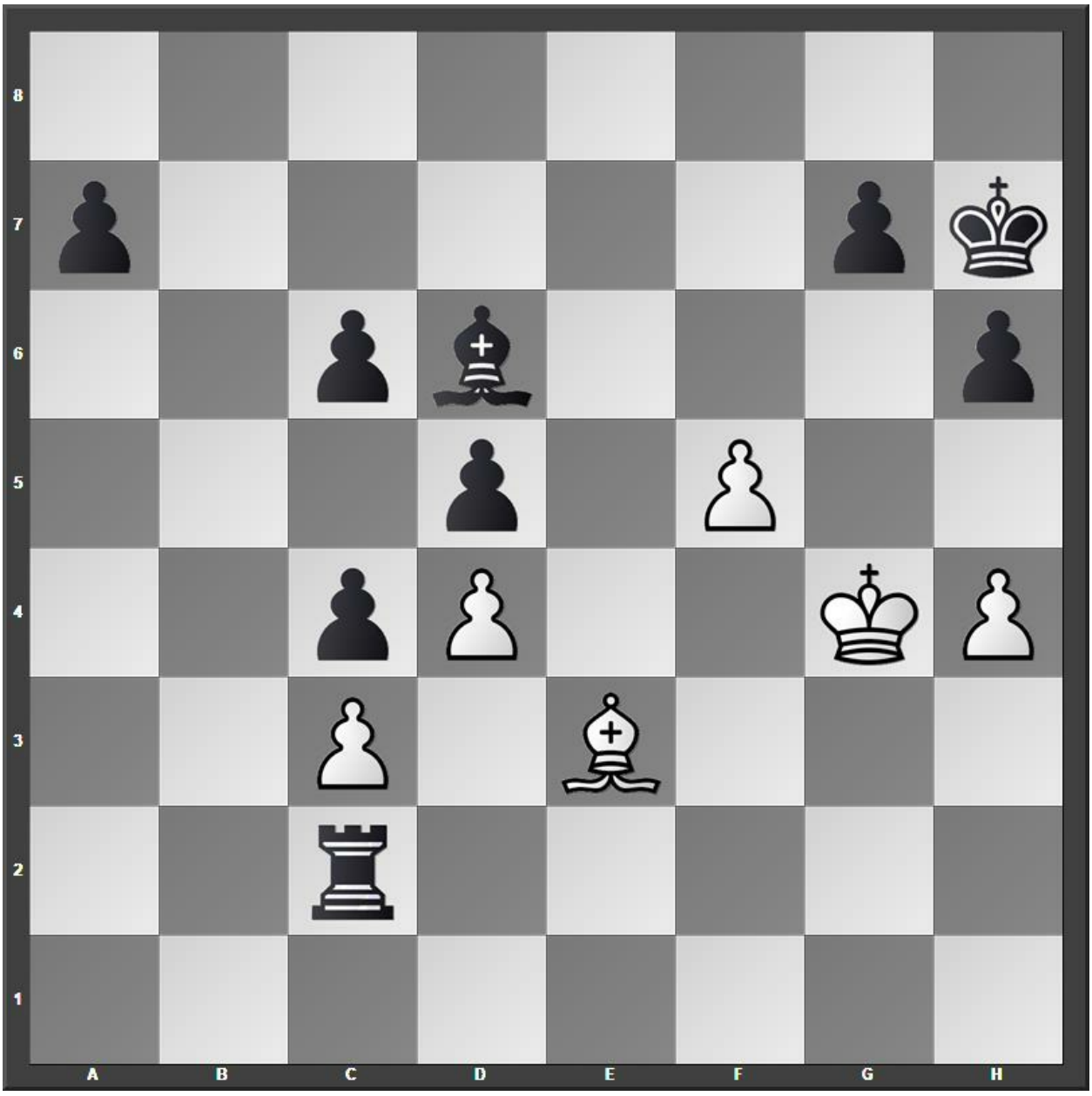
**29.Kg3 Qxf3+**

**30.Kxf3 Rb2**

**31.f5 exf5**

**32.gxf5 Rxa2**

**33.Kg4 Rc2 0–1**



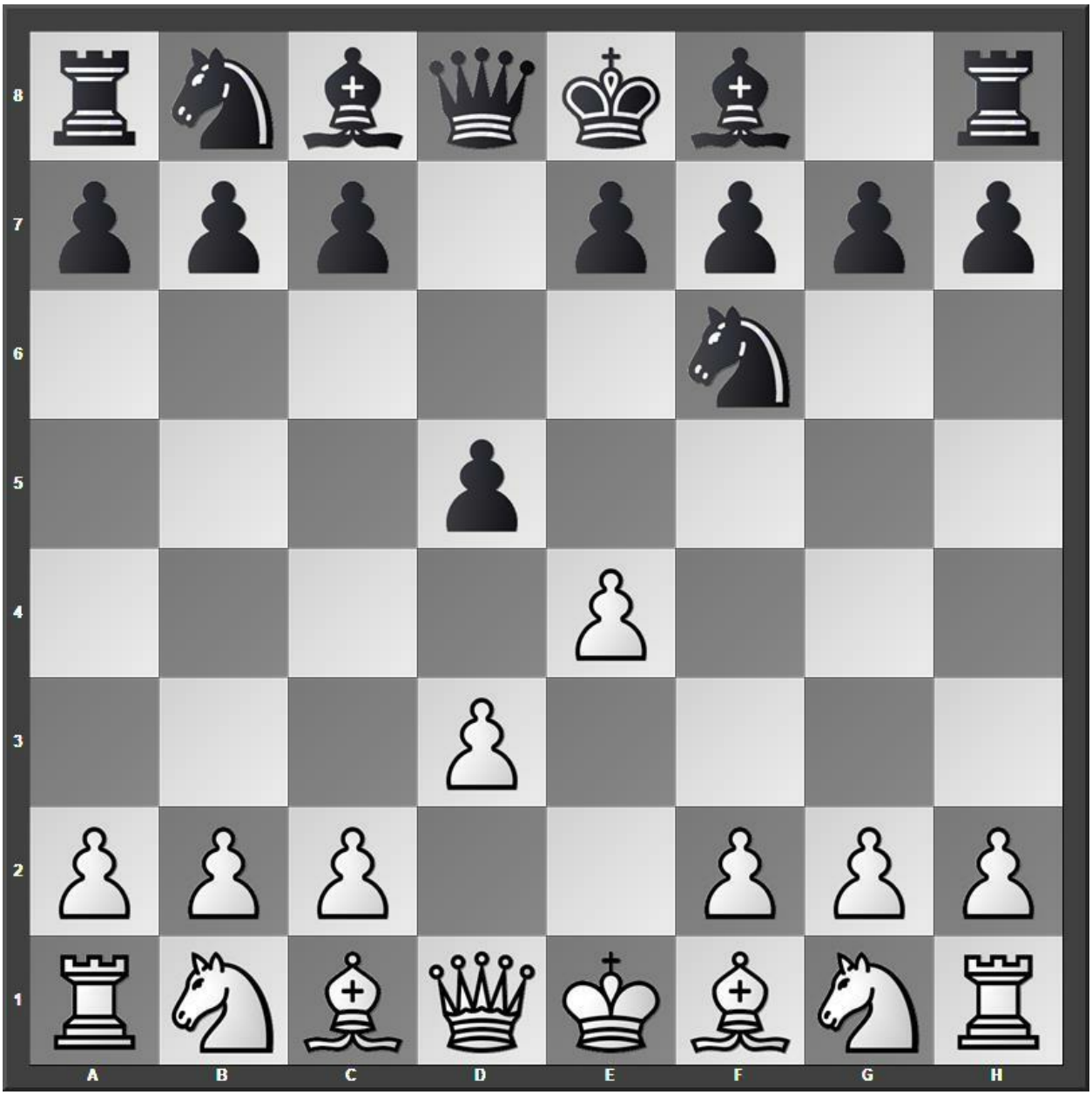
White resigns

## Game 2 – B02 [2.d3 d5 3.exd5 Nxd5]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 19.01.2022

**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.d3 d5**



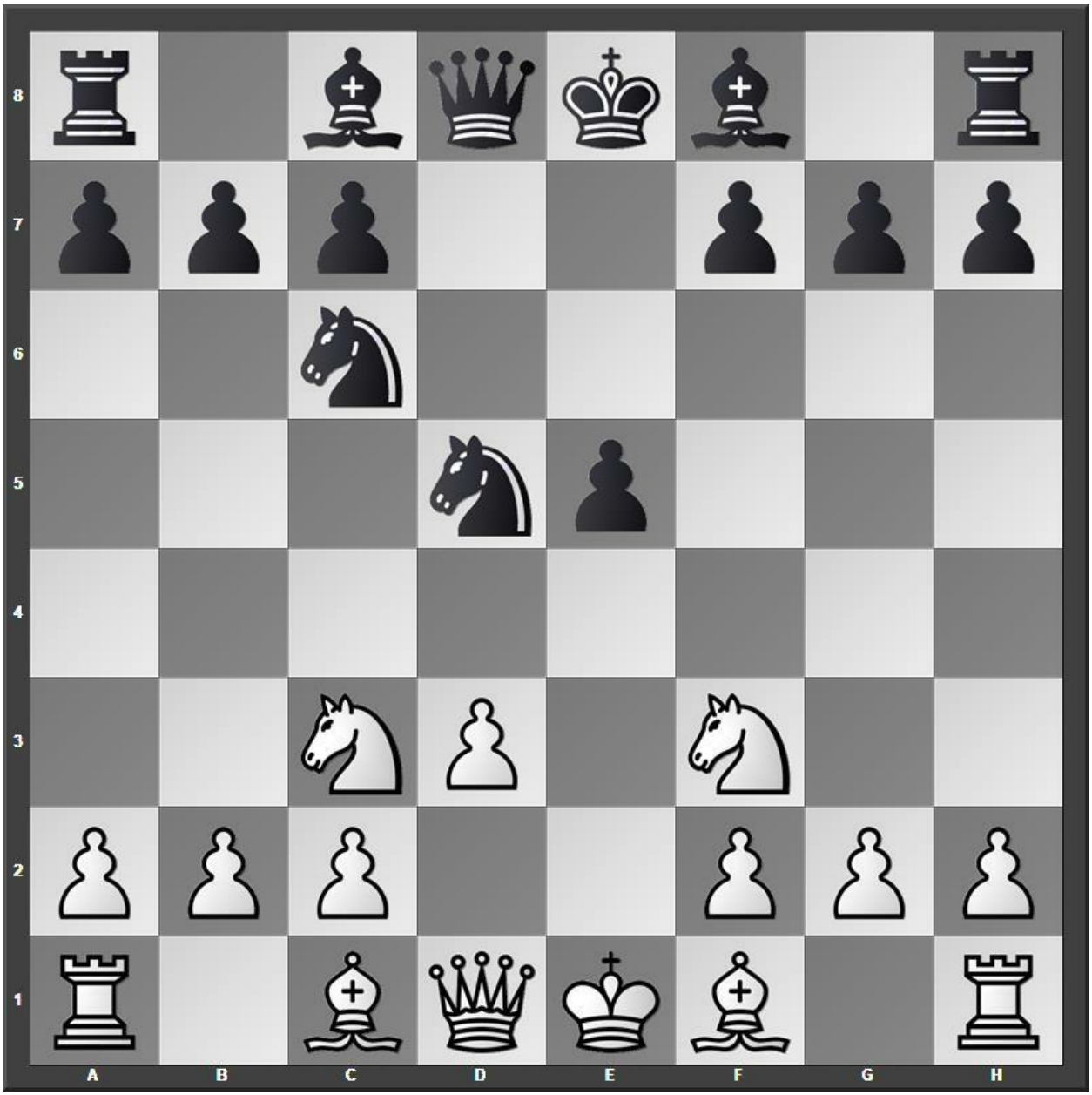
White passively defends e4. Black increases the tension.

**3.exd5 Nxd5**

**4.Nf3 Nc6**

Another good approach is 4...c5 like a Sicilian Defence.

**5.Nc3 e5**




**6.Bg5**

If 6.Nxe5 Nxe5 7.Qe2 f6 8.d4 Bb4 9.Bd2 0–0 10.dxe5 Bxc3 11.Bxc3 Nxc3 12.bxc3 Re8 Black stands better.

**6...f6**

**7.Be3 Be6**

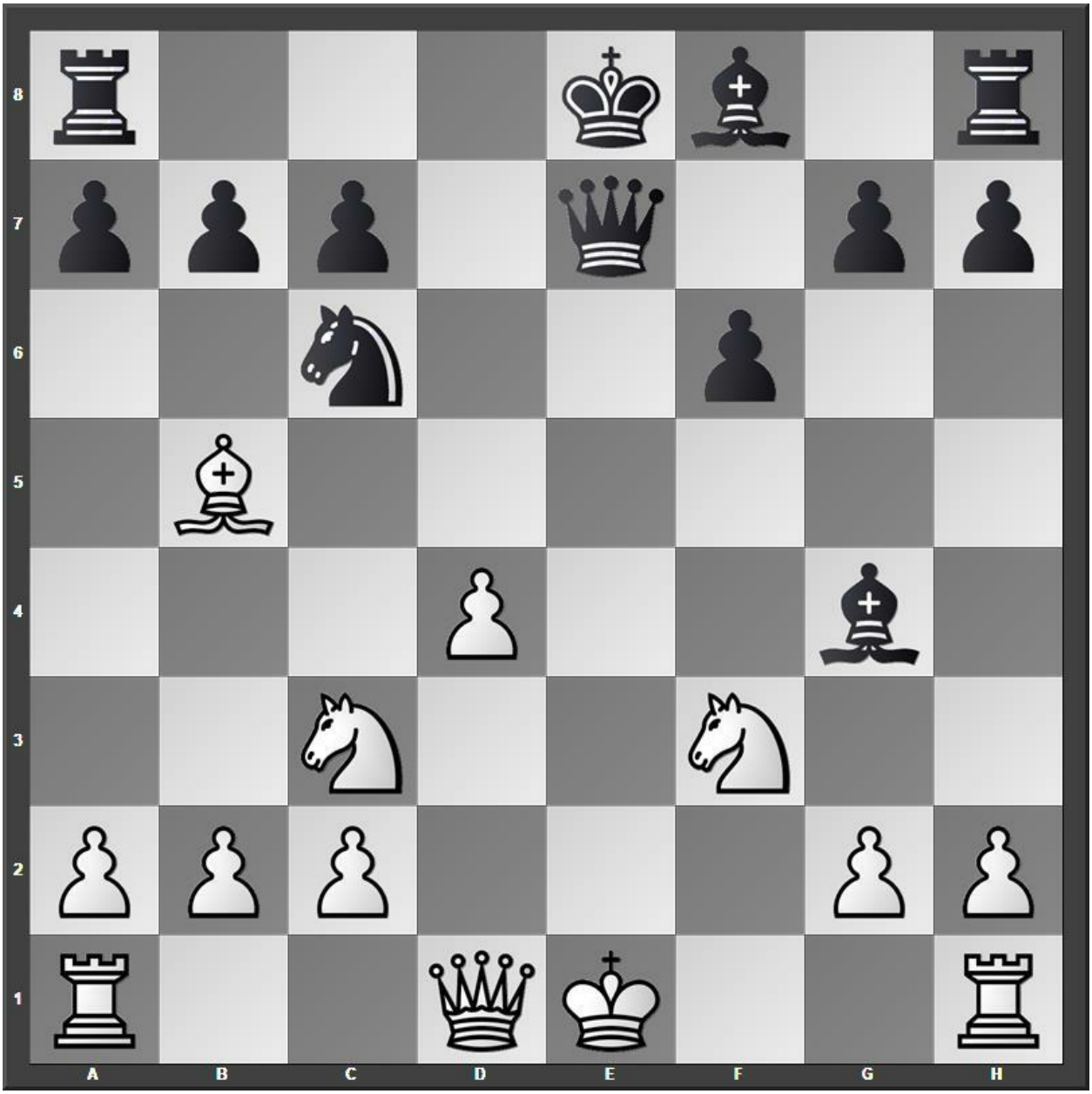
**8.d4 Nxe3**

Black could try 8...Bb4 9.Qd2 e4 10.Ng1 Na5 when White remains under some significant pressure.

**9.fxe3 exd4**

**10.exd4 Bg4**

**11.Bb5 Qe7+**



**12.Ne2**

White could try 12.Kf2 0–0–0 13.Bxc6 bxc6 14.Qd3 with equal chances.

**12...Bxf3**

**13.gxf3 Qb4+**

White's best continuation seems to be 14.Nc3 0–0–0 15.Bxc6 bxc6 16.0–0 Rxd4 when Black is only a pawn up.

**14.c3 Qxb5**

White loses a bishop to a check and capture combination.

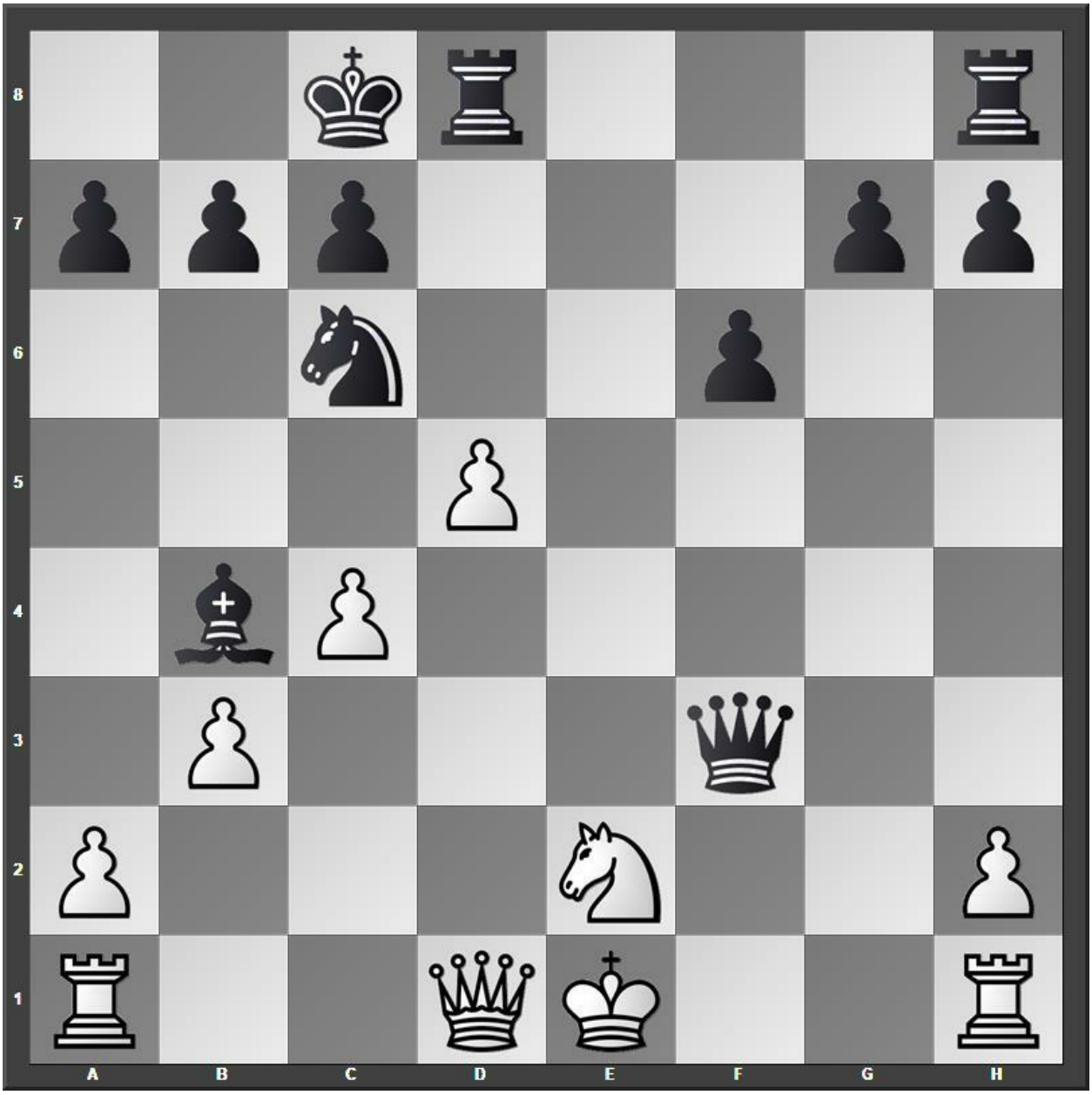
**15.b3 0–0–0**

**16.c4 Qa5+**

**17.Kf1 Qf5**

**18.d5 Qxf3+**

**19.Ke1 Bb4+ 0–1**



White resigns

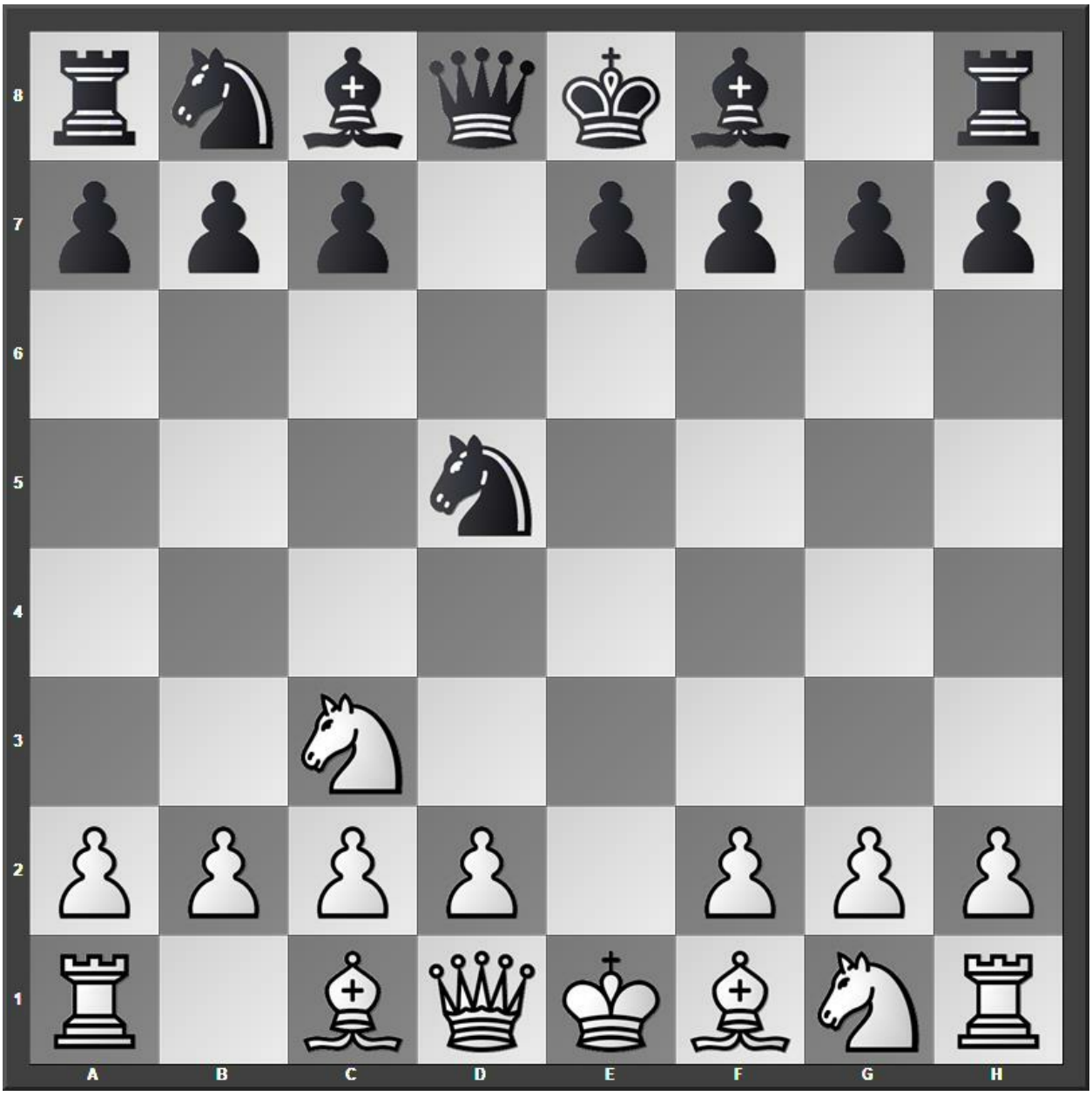
# Game 3 – B02 [2.Nc3 d5 3.exd5 Nxd5]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 13.12.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.Nc3 d5**

**3.exd5 Nxd5**



This same position occurs in the Scandinavian. If 4.Bc4 c6 5.Qf3 Nf6 6.Ne4

Nbd7 similar to the Caro-Kann Defence.

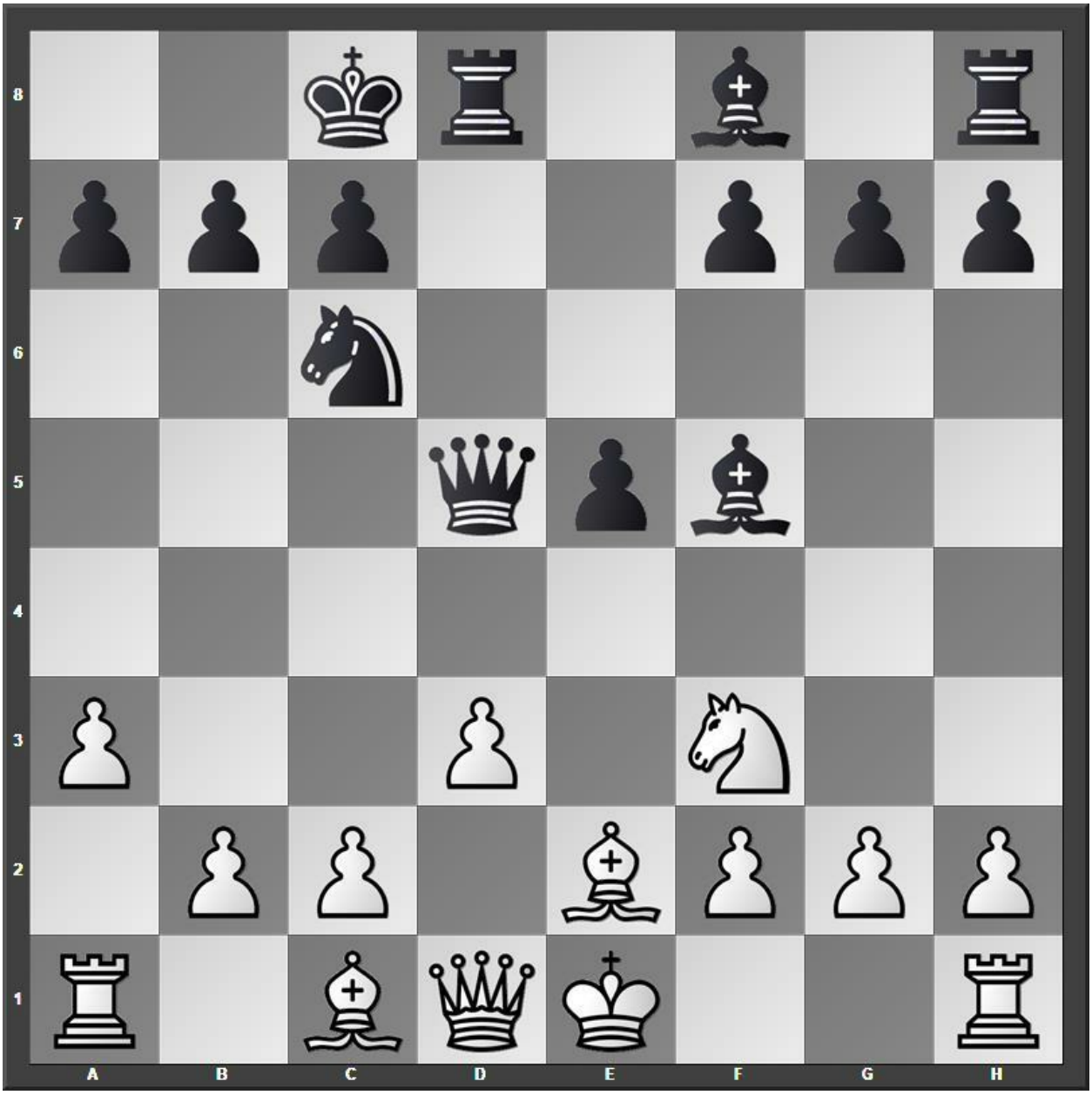
**4.Nxd5 Qxd5**

**5.d3 e5**

**6.Nf3 Nc6**

**7.a3 Bf5**

**8.Be2 0–0–0**



**9.h3 f6**

Open lines tend to favor Black after 9...e4 10.dxe4 Qxe4 11.Bd2 Nd4 12.Nxd4 Rxd4.

**10.0–0 g5**

**11.c4 Qd7**

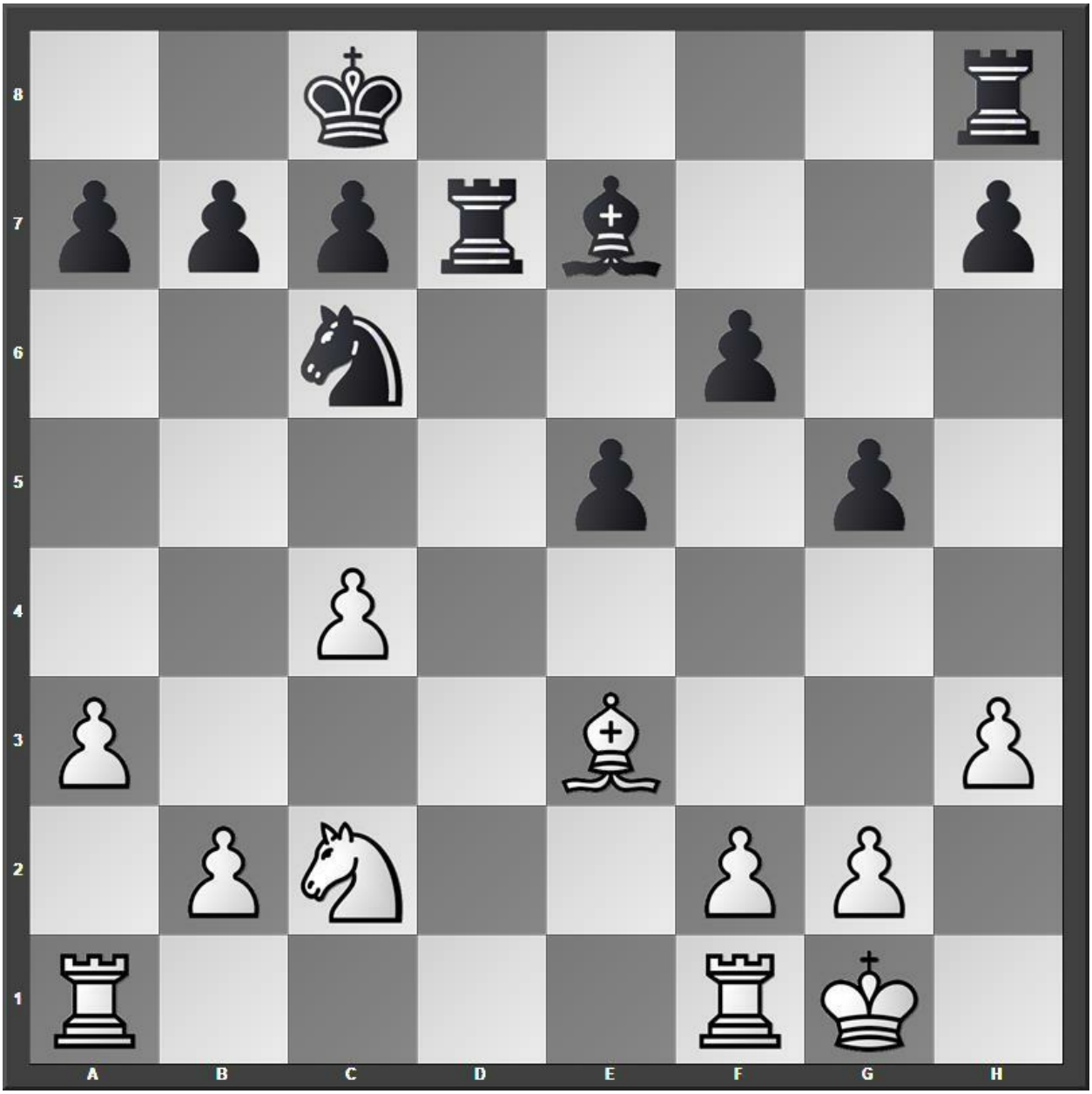
**12.Be3 Bxd3**

**13.Bxd3 Qxd3**

**14.Qxd3 Rxd3**

**15.Ne1 Rd7**

**16.Nc2 Be7**



**17.Nb4 Bxb4**

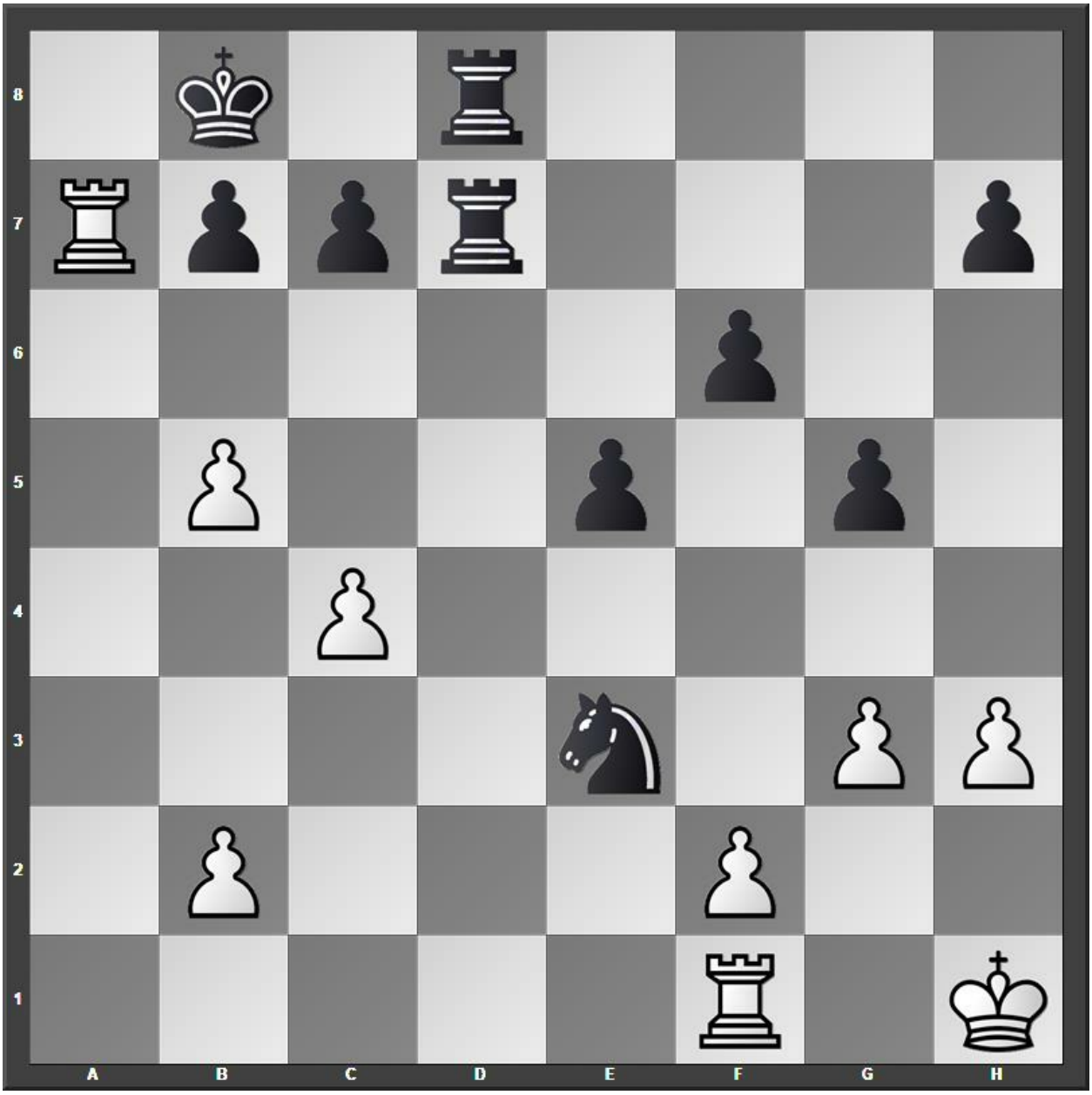
**18.axb4 Kb8**

**19.b5 Nd4**

**20.Kh1 Rhd8**

**21.g3 Nc2**

**22.Rxa7 Nxe3**



**23.Raa1 Nxf1**

**24.Rxf1 Rd1**

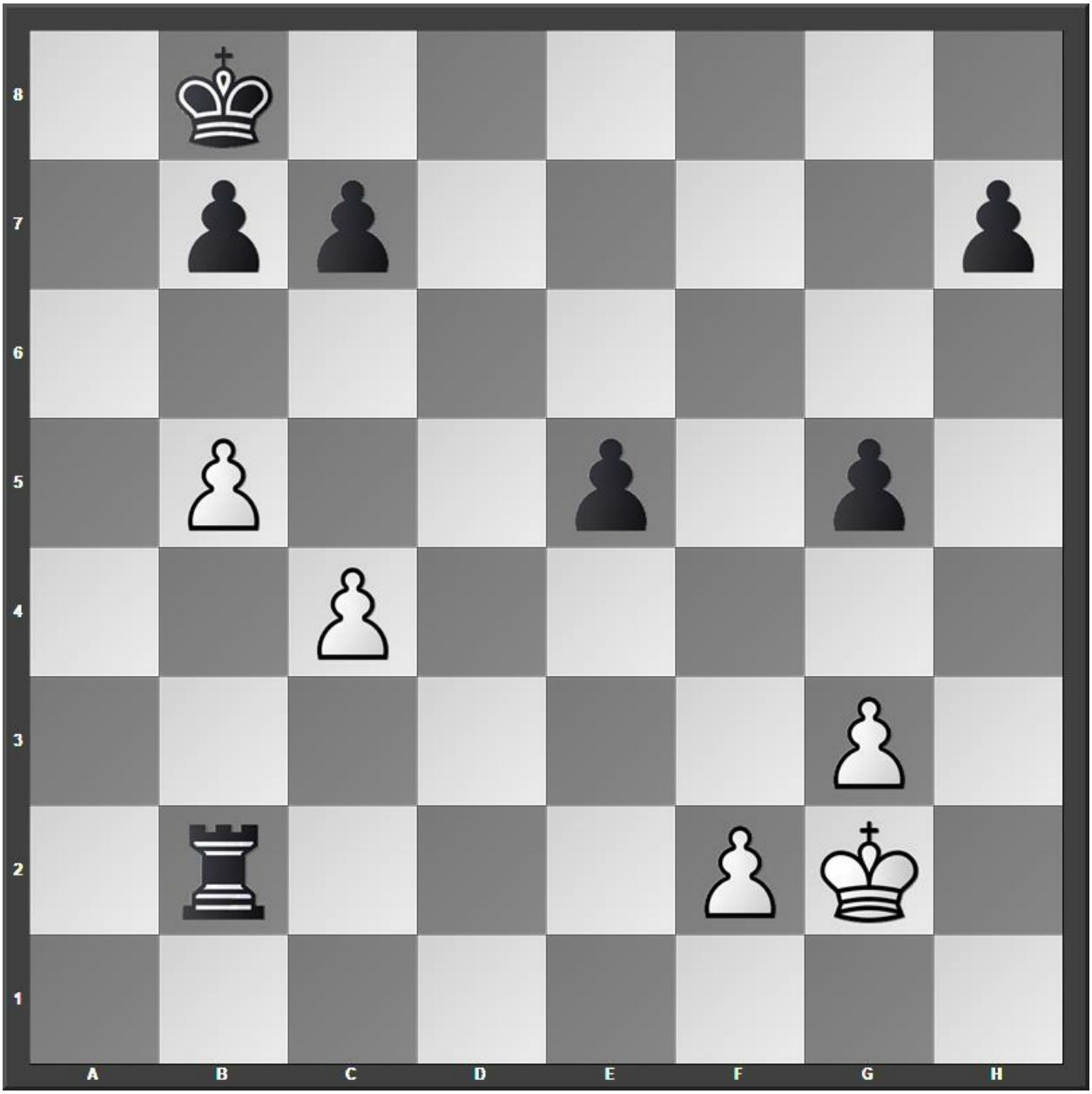
**25.Rxd1 Rxd1+**

White could resign here. But instead, my opponent played until mate and then requested a rematch. Nope. Denied.

**26.Kg2 Rb1**

**27.h4 Rxb2**

**28.hxg5 fxg5**



**29.g4 Rb3**

**30.c5 Rxb5**

**31.c6 bxc6**

**32.f3 Rb3**

**33.Kg3 e4**

**34.Kf2 Rxf3+**

**35.Ke2 Rd3**

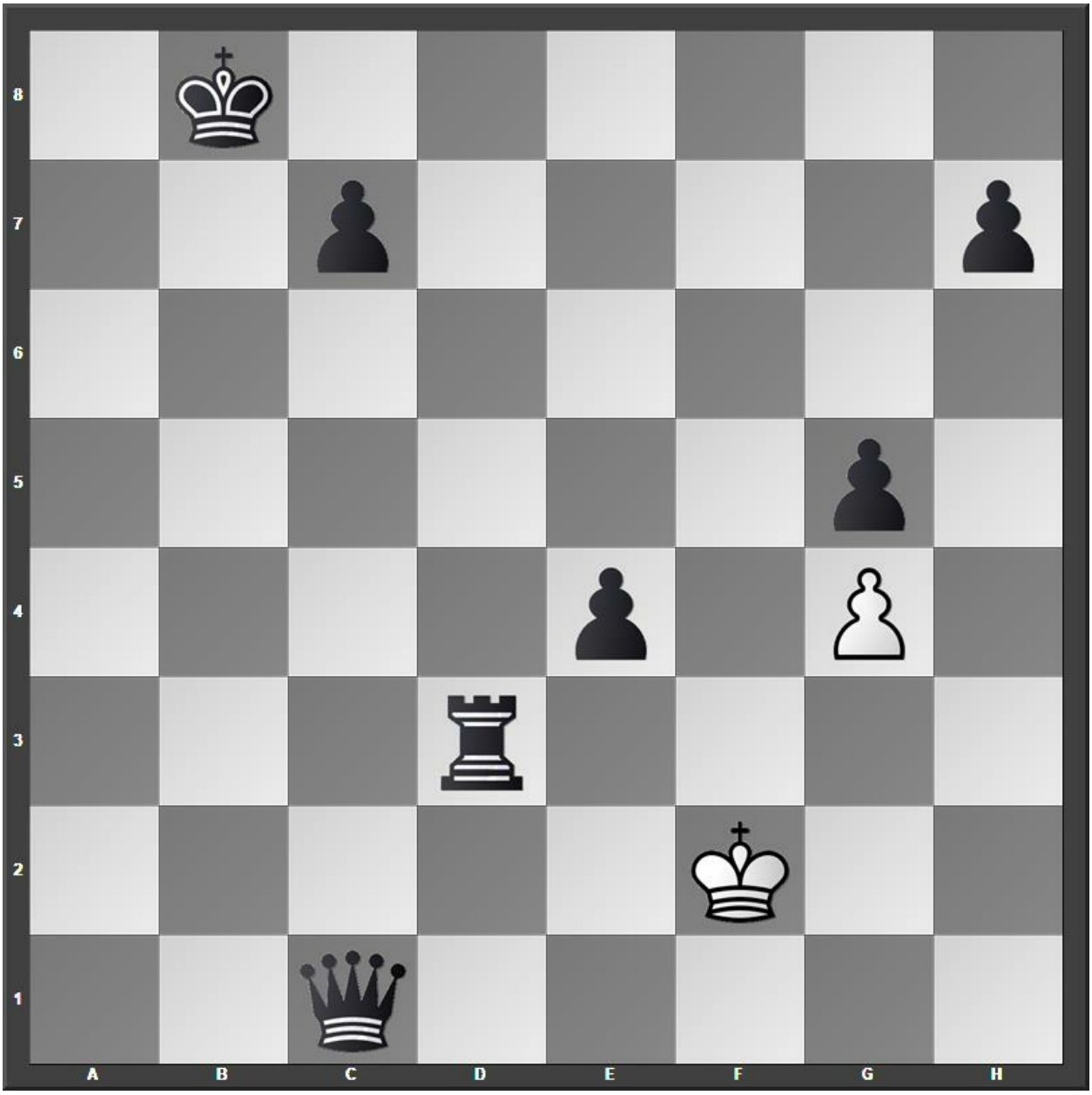
**36.Kf2 c5**

**37.Ke2 c4**

**38.Kf2 c3**

**39.Ke2 c2**

**40.Kf2 c1Q**



**41.Kg2 Qc2+**

**42.Kf1 Rd1# 0–1**

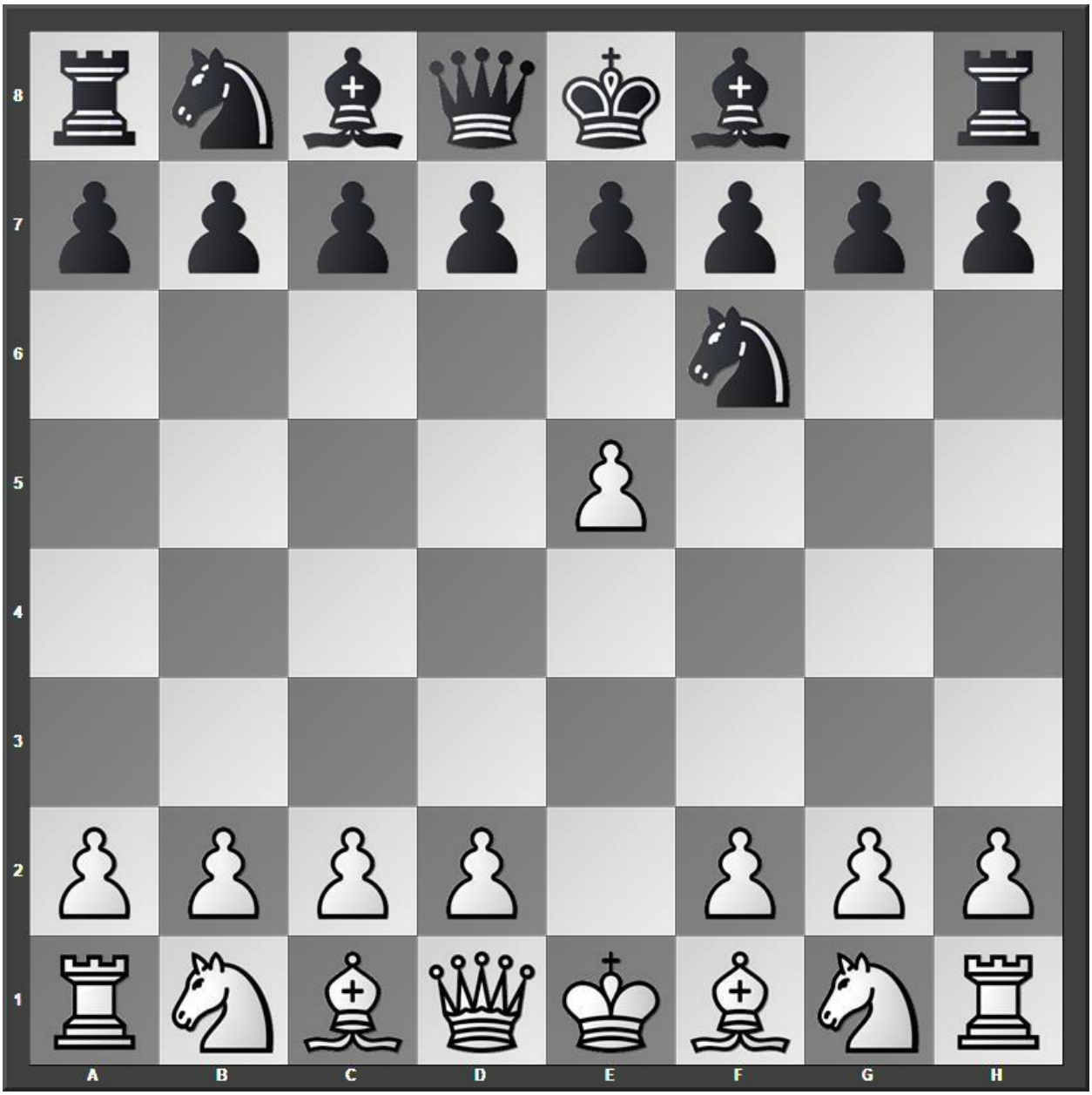
White is checkmated

# Game 4 – B02 [2.e5 Ne4 3.d4 d5]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 22.11.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5**



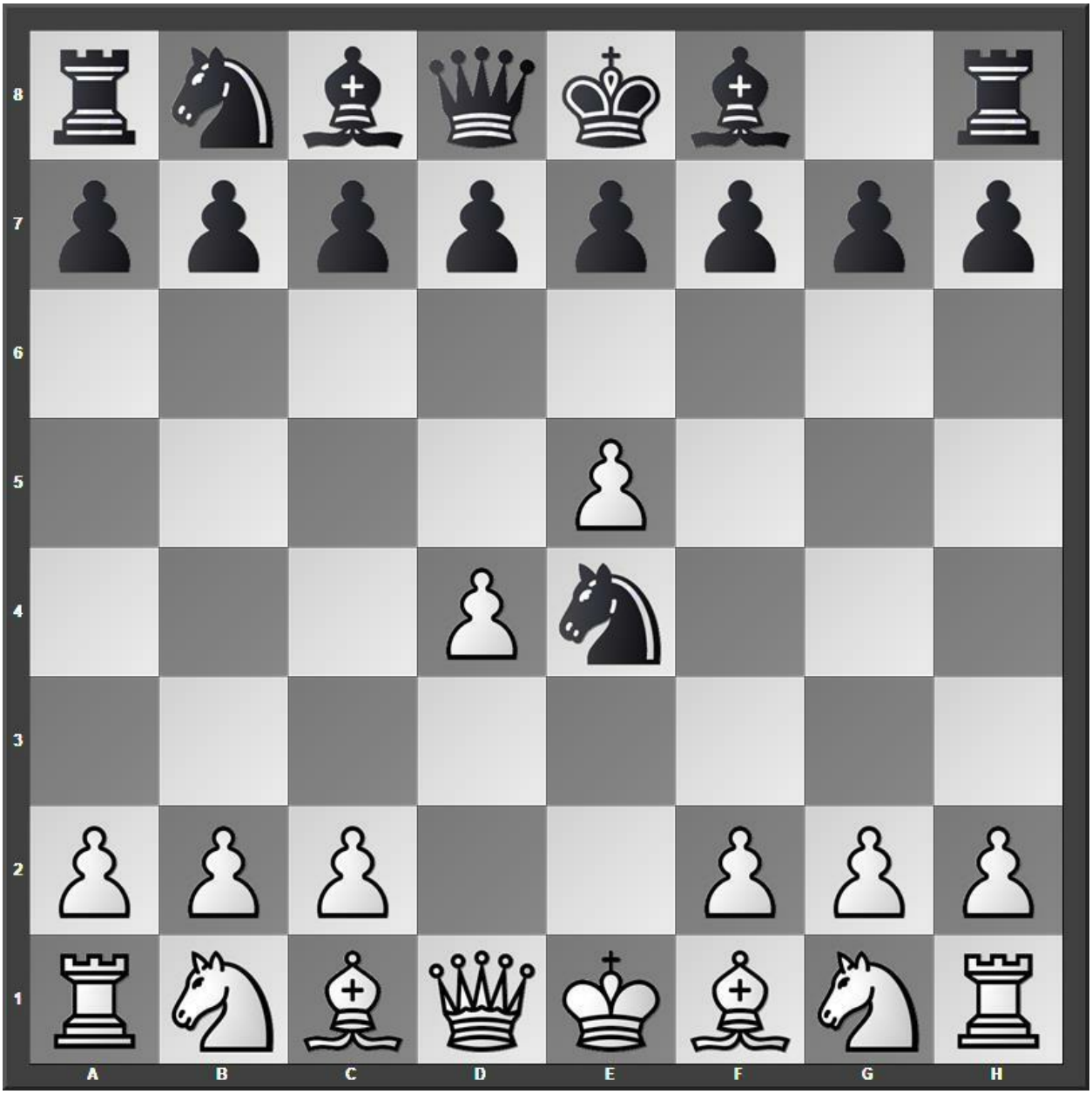
I recommend that White immediately attacks the knight.

**2…Ne4**

This is a weak move that only works against poor play. Best is 2...Nd5. Too slow is 2…Ng8. Two others are awful: 2...Nh5 3.Qxh5 in Sawyer-Guest, Chess.com 04.06.2021; 2…Ng4 3.Qxg4 in Sawyer-Guest, Chess.com 06.072021.

**3.d4**

Black's knight is stuck in the middle.



**3…d5**

This loses the knight. Better is 3...f6 although 4.Nh3, 4.f3; or 4.Bd3 all give White excellent winning chances.

**4.f3**

Black's knight has no safe retreating moves.

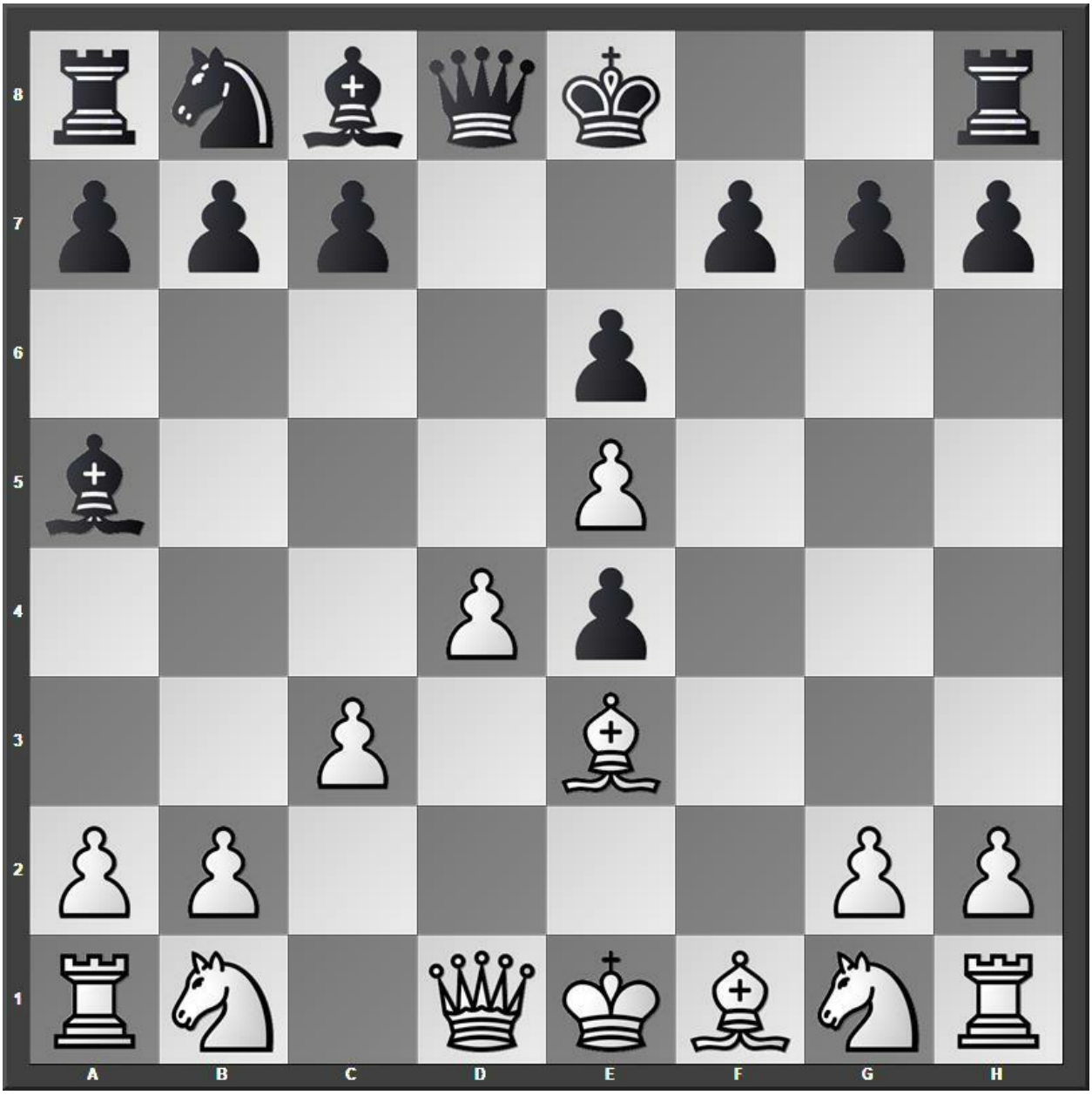
**4...e6**

**5.fxe4 dxe4**

Scary is 5...Qh4+ 6.Ke2 Qg4+ 7.Kd2 Qf4+ 8.Kc3 Qxe4 9.Nf3 c5 10.dxc5 Bxc5 11.b3 but the king escapes to b2.

**6.Be3 Bb4+**

**7.c3 Ba5**



A good approach for White is 8.Qg4 Kf8 9.Qxe4 netting the e4 pawn. Instead, my next move threatens to win a bishop.

**8.a4 0–0**

**9.b4 Qh4+**

If 9...Bb6 10.a5 Black's bishop is trapped.

**10.g3 Qe7**

**11.bxa5 Nc6**

**12.Nd2 Nxa5**

**13.Nxe4 Nc4**

If 13...f5 14.exf6 gxf6 15.Qg4+ Kh8 16.Qh4 winning.

**14.Bxc4 f5**

**15.exf6 gxf6**

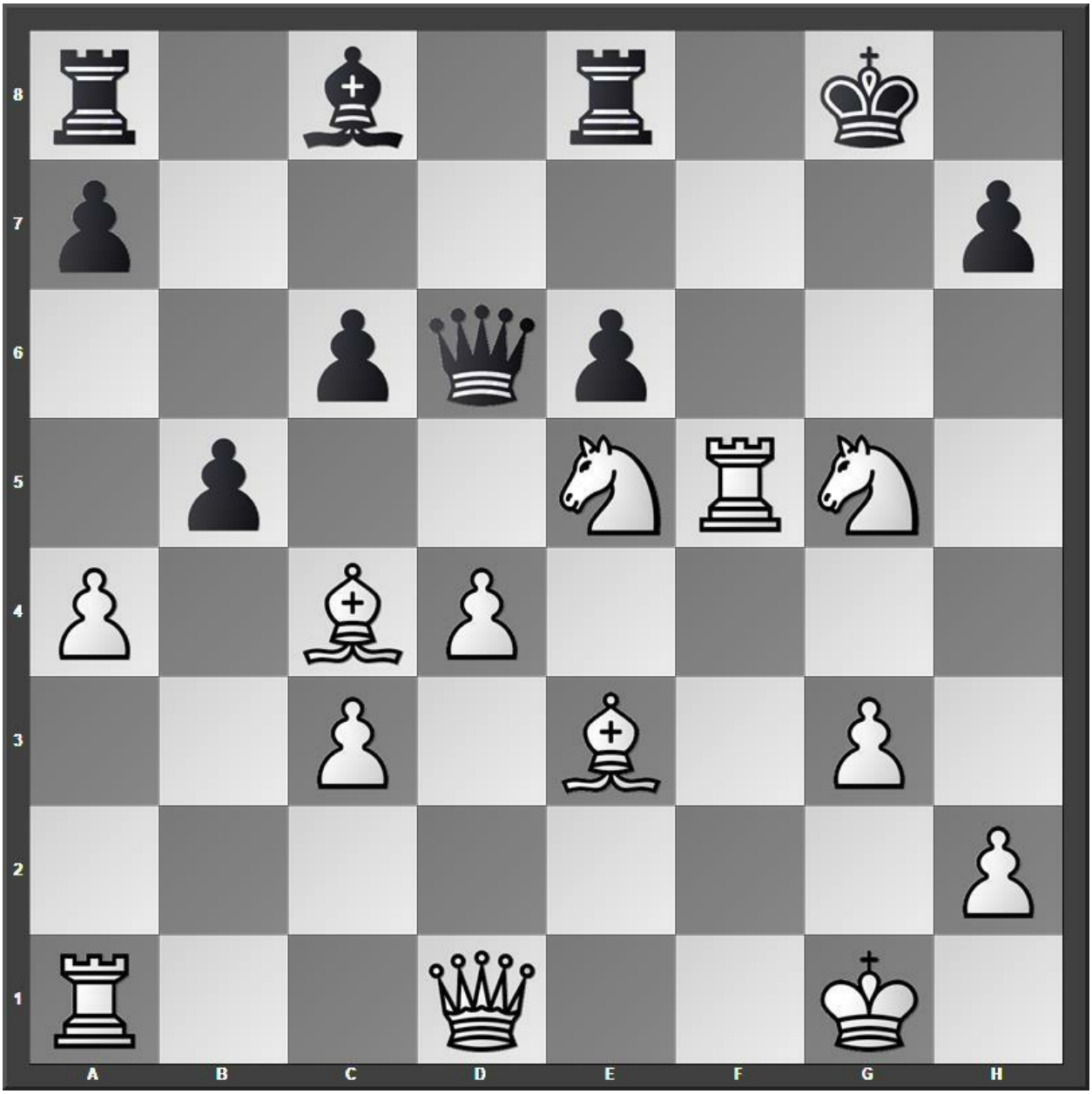
**16.Nf3 f5**

**17.Neg5 Re8**

**18.0–0 c6**

**19.Ne5 Qd6**

**20.Rxf5 b5**



My opponent hopes to take on c4 and then f5, but there is not enough time. White's attack arrived too fast.

**21.Qh5 bxc4**

**22.Qxh7# 1–0**

Black is checkmated

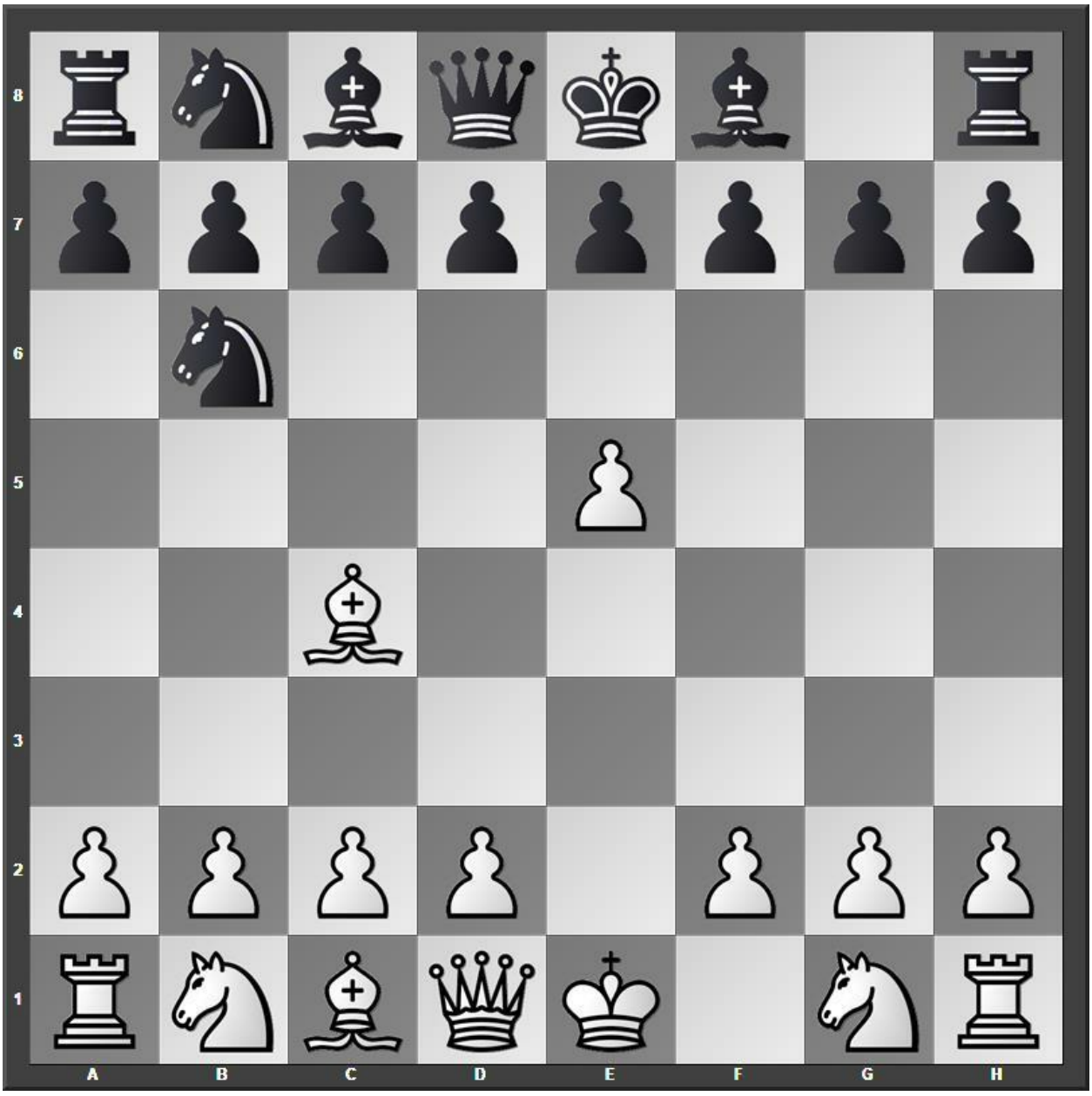
## Game 5 – B02 [2.e5 Nd5 3.Bc4 Nb6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 16.12.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.Bc4 Nb6**

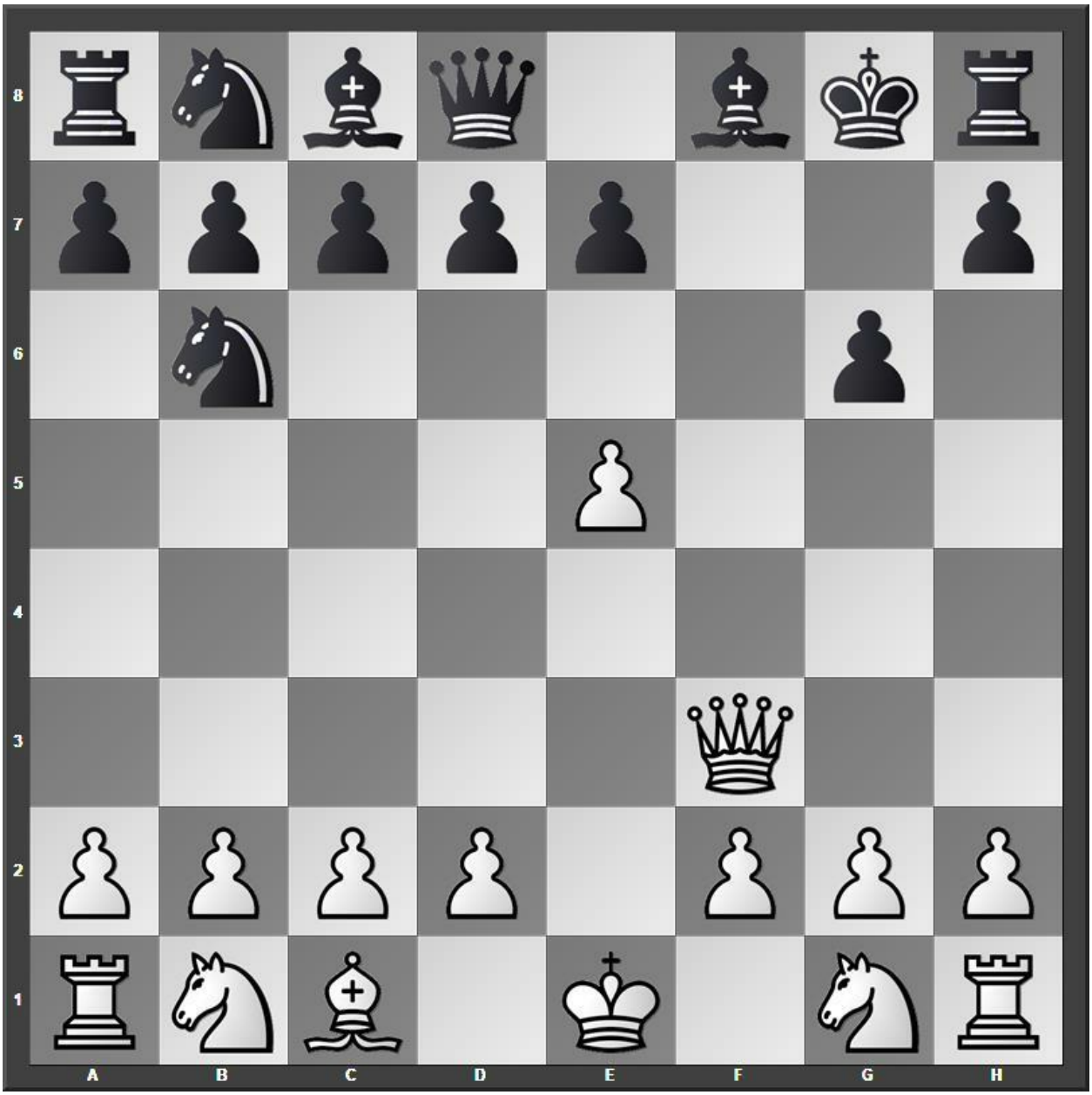


**4.Bxf7+ Kxf7**

"Patzer sees a check, gives a check." Bobby Fischer.

**5.Qh5+ g6**

**6.Qf3+ Kg8**



If 7.Qb3+ e6 8.d4 d6 and Black still remains up a bishop.

**7.Ne2 Bg7**

**8.d4 Nc6**

**9.0–0 Qf8**

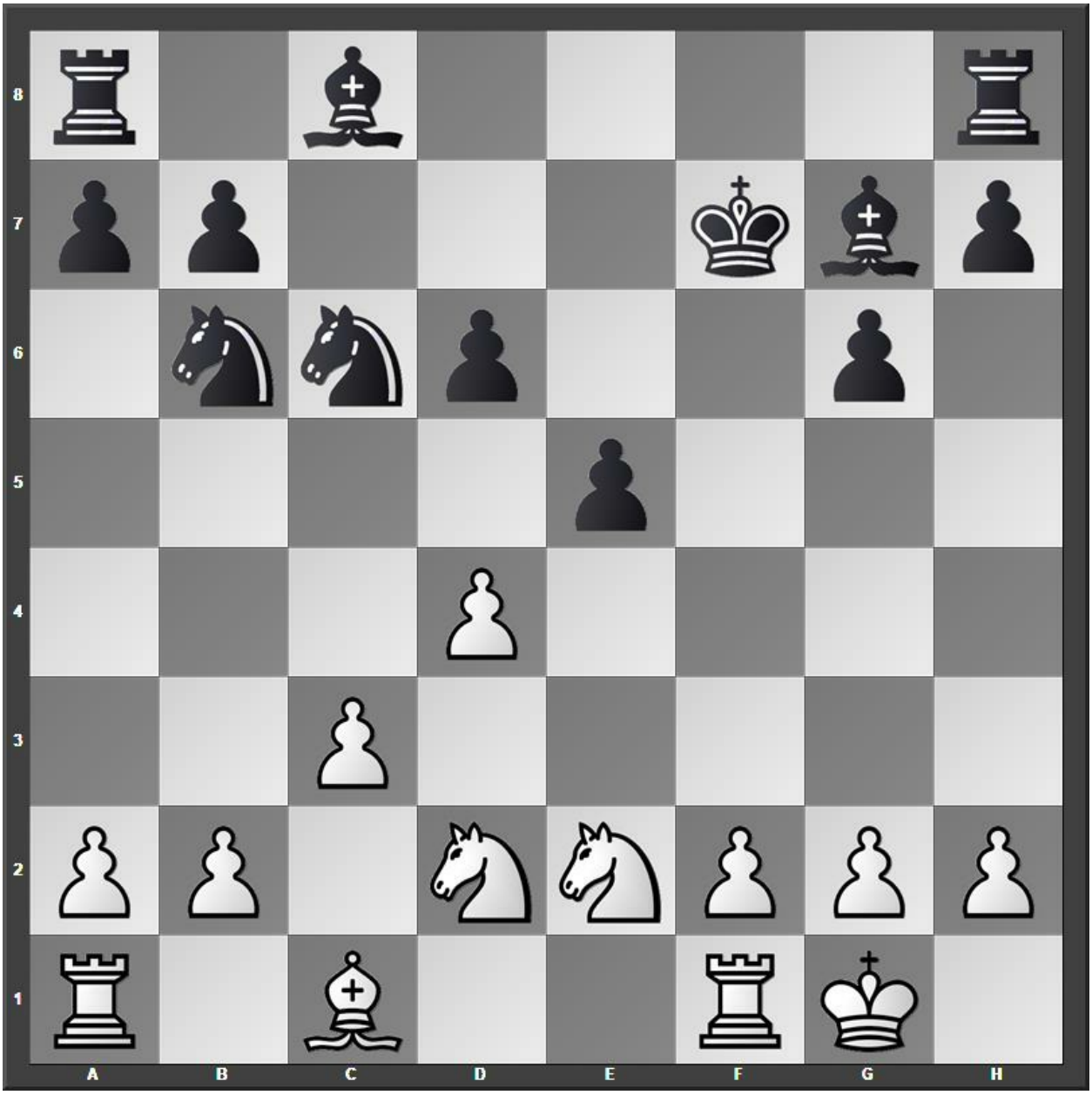
**10.Qb3+ Qf7**

**11.Qxf7+ Kxf7**

**12.c3 d6**

**13.exd6 cxd6**

**14.Nd2 e5**



It’s like Fischer's 1970 move 10...e5! vs Duncan Suttles.

**15.d5 Nxd5**

**16.c4 Nf4**

**17.Nxf4 exf4**

**18.Ne4 Be5**

**19.b3 Bxa1 0–1**

Black is up a piece and a rook.

White resigns

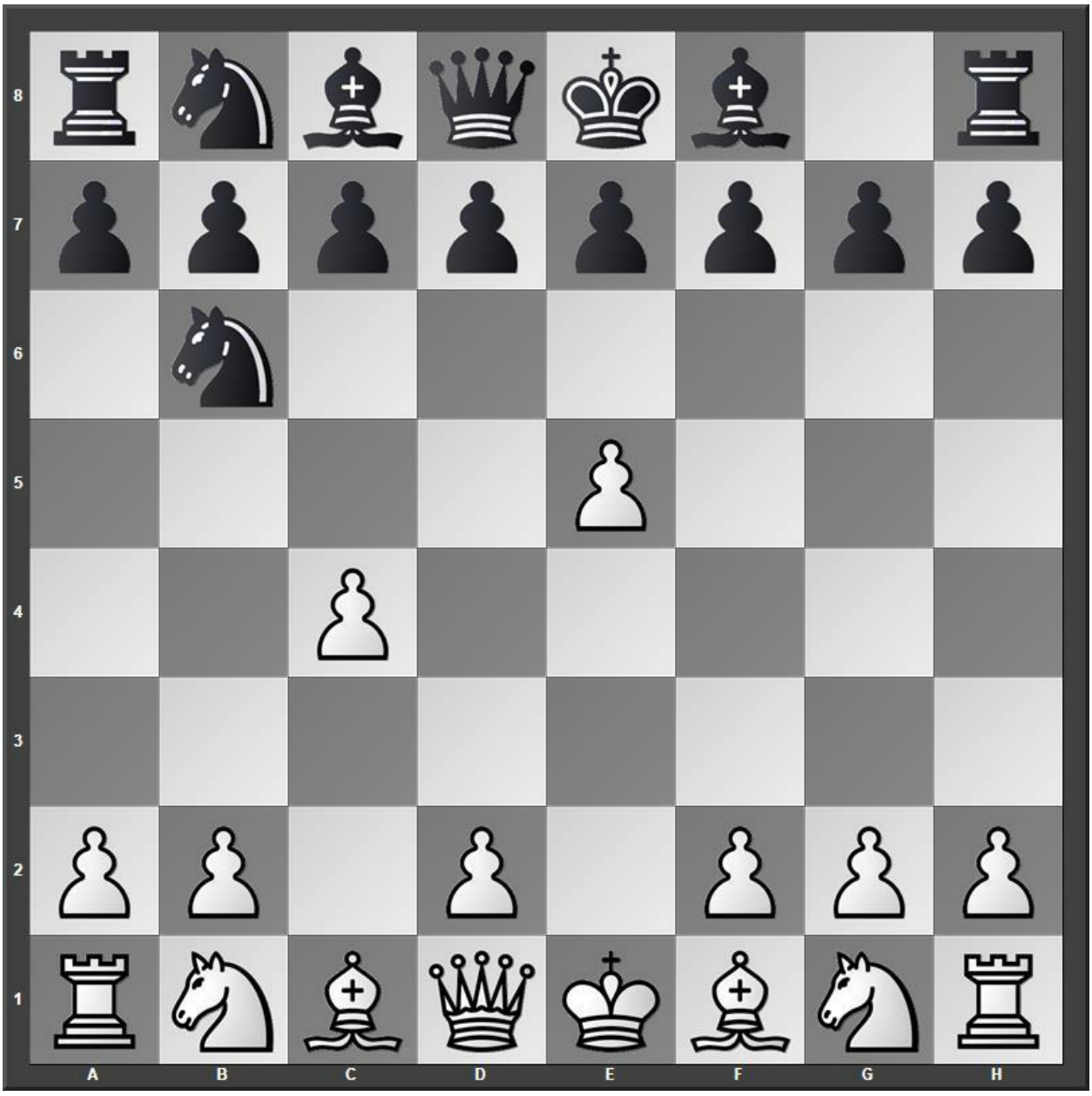
# Game 6 – B02 [2.e5 Nd5 3.c4 Nb6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 13.10.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.c4 Nb6**



White avoids the move d2–d4. One popular continuation is the Two Pawns

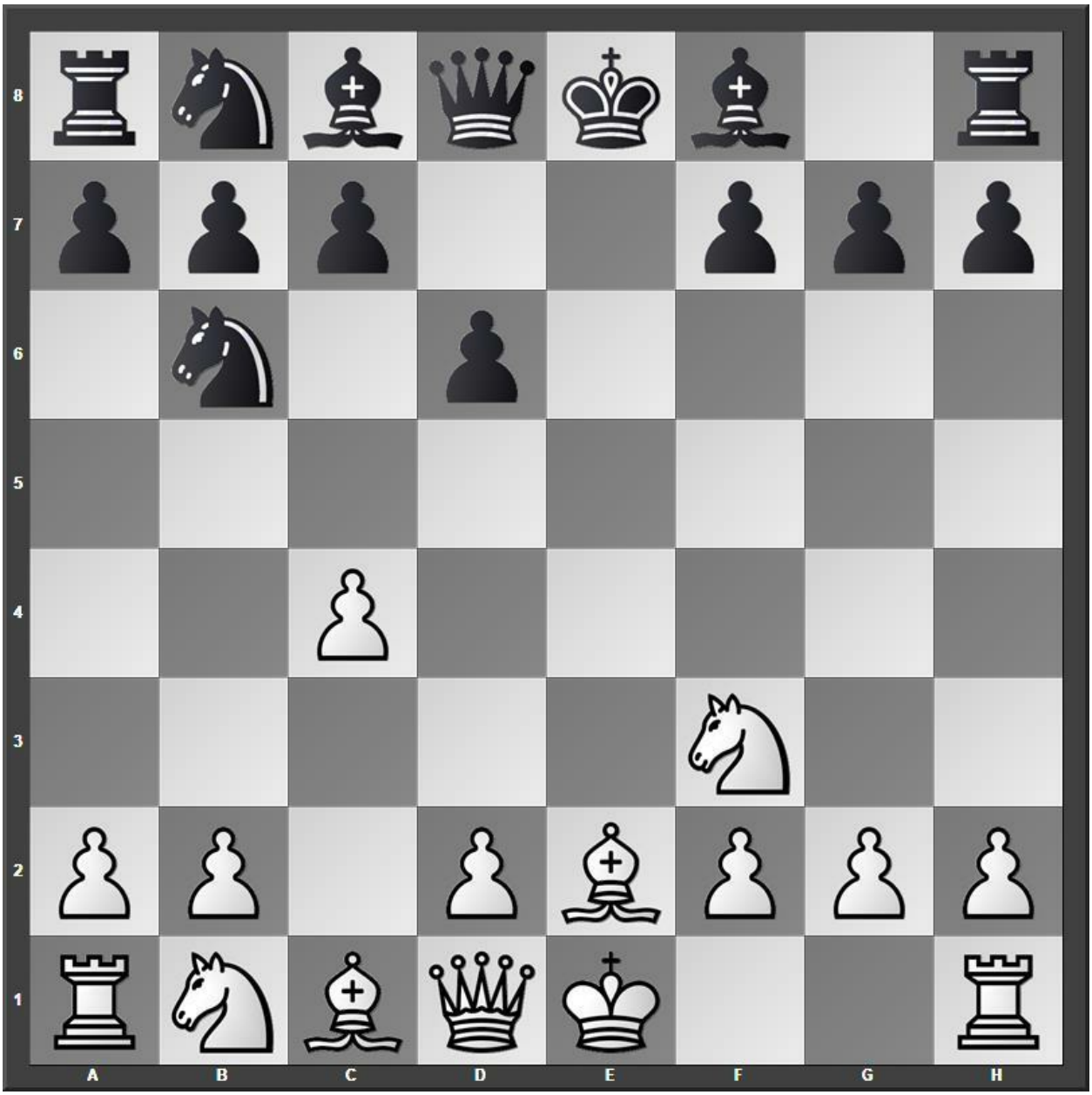
Attack with 4.c5 Nd5 5.Bc4. Black defends the knight with either 5…e6 or 5…c6 with an equal game.

**4.Nf3 d6**

**5.exd6 exd6**

The Exchange Variation Black recaptures with either pawn.

**6.Be2**




**6…Be7**

Black could equalize immediately with 6...d5.

**7.0–0 0–0**

**8.b3 Bf6**

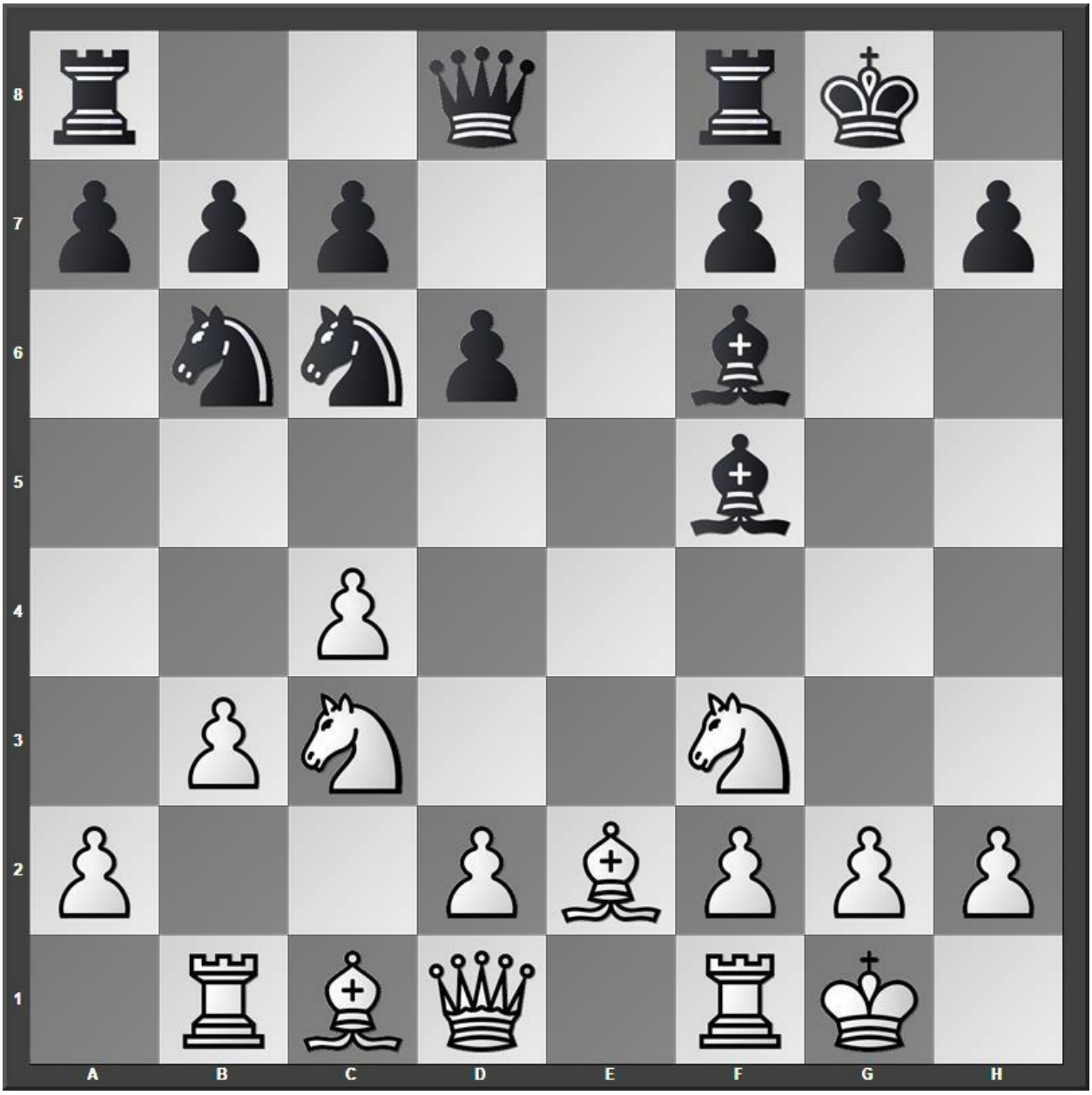
Black relocates the bishop to the long diagonal.

**9.Nc3 Nc6**

**10.Rb1**

There's still time for 10.d4. I like Black’s four minor pieces.

**10...Bf5**



**11.d3**

White sees b1 but not c3. Better is 11.Rb2 Nd4 12.Nxd4 Bxd4 13.a4 c6 14.Ra2 Nd7 15.Bb2 Qf6 but it favors Black.

**11...Bxc3 0–1**

White resigns

## Game 7 – B03 [2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 Nb6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 20.09.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

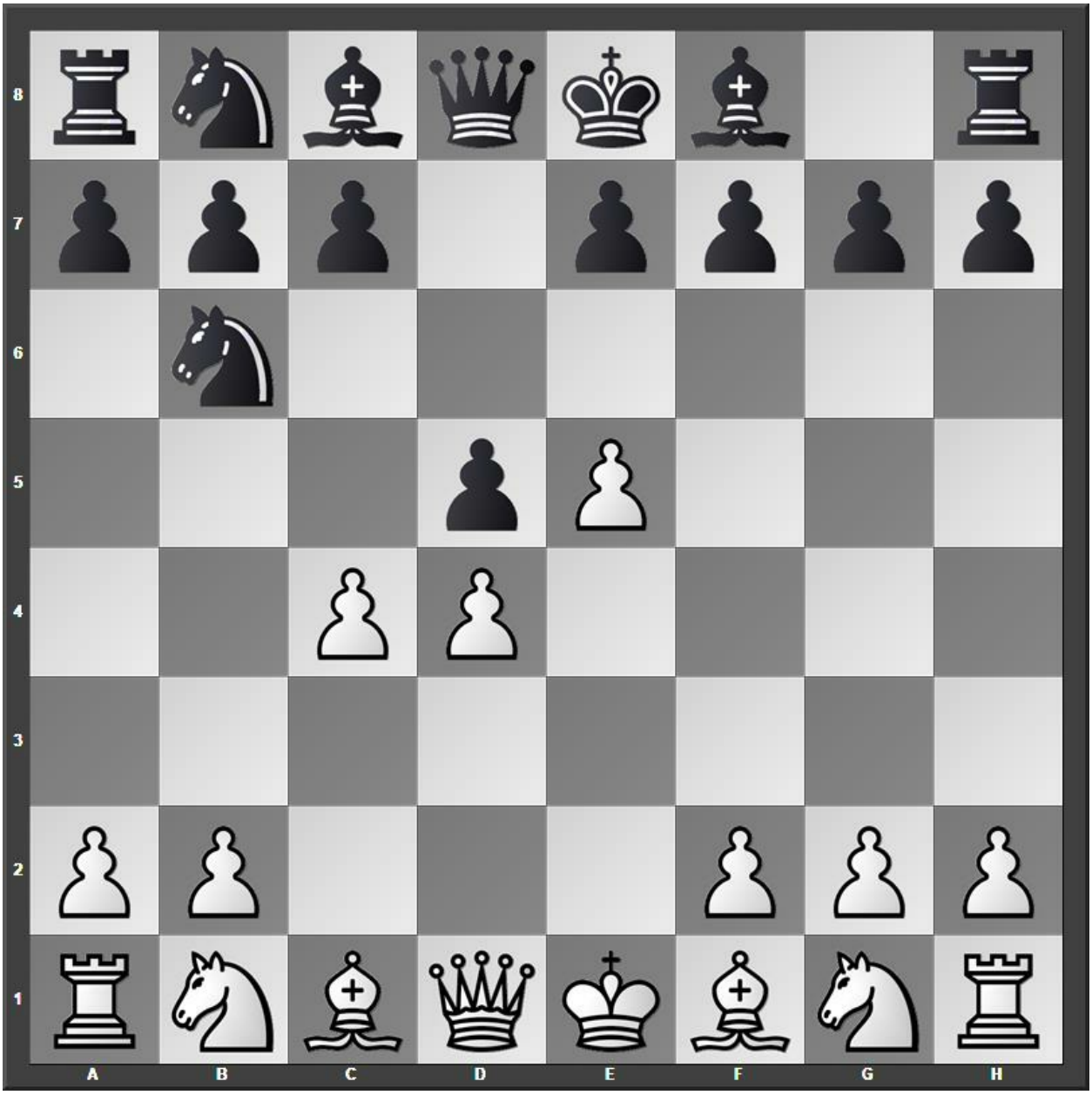
**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 Nb6**

The standard move is 3...d6.

**4.c4 d5**

4...d6 would transpose to normal lines.



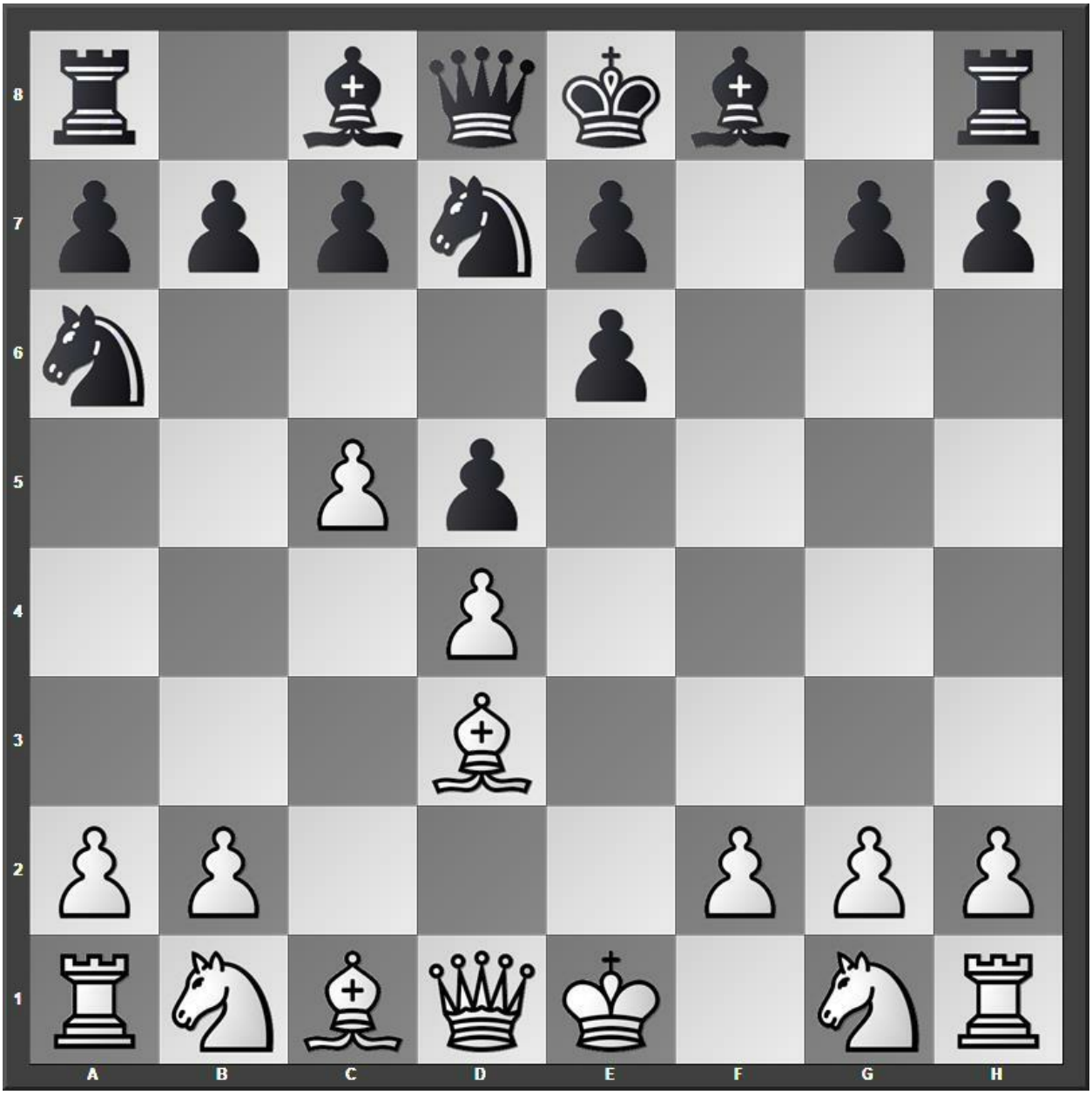
**5.c5 N6d7**

5...Nc4 6.Nf3 favors White.

**6.Bd3 Na6**

**7.e6 fxe6**

If 7...Ndb8 8.exf7+ Kxf7 9.Nc3 Nc6 10.Nf3 White stands better. Instead, Black falls to a thematic Fool's Mate idea.



**8.Qh5+ g6**

**9.Qxg6+ hxg6**

**10.Bxg6# 1–0**

Black is checkmated

# Chapter 2 – Alekhine 2.e5 Nd5 3.d4 d6

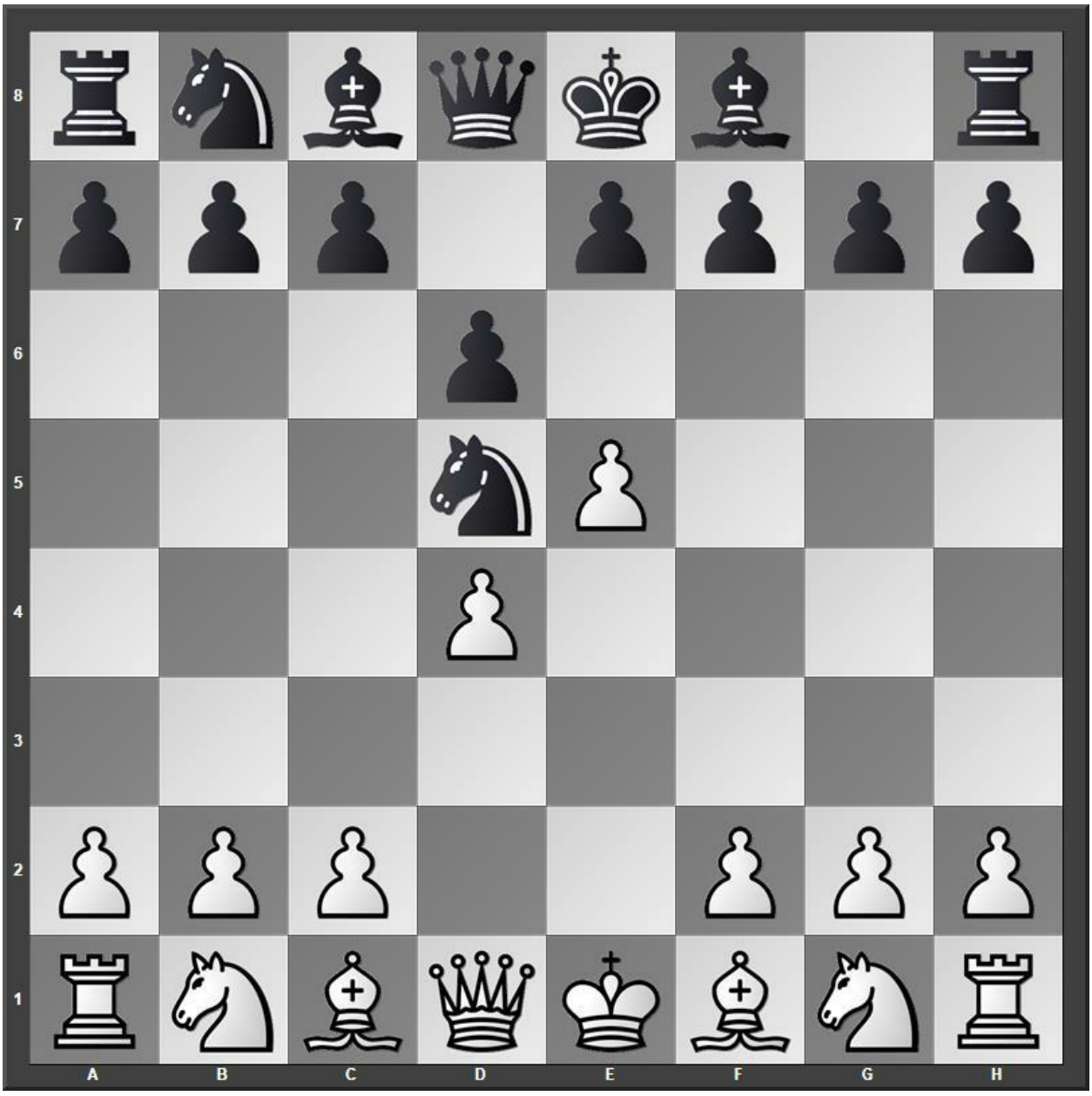
## Game 8 – B05 [4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Bc4 c6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 11.11.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**



Black increases tension and pressure against the e5 pawn.

**4.Nf3 Bg4**

**5.Bc4**

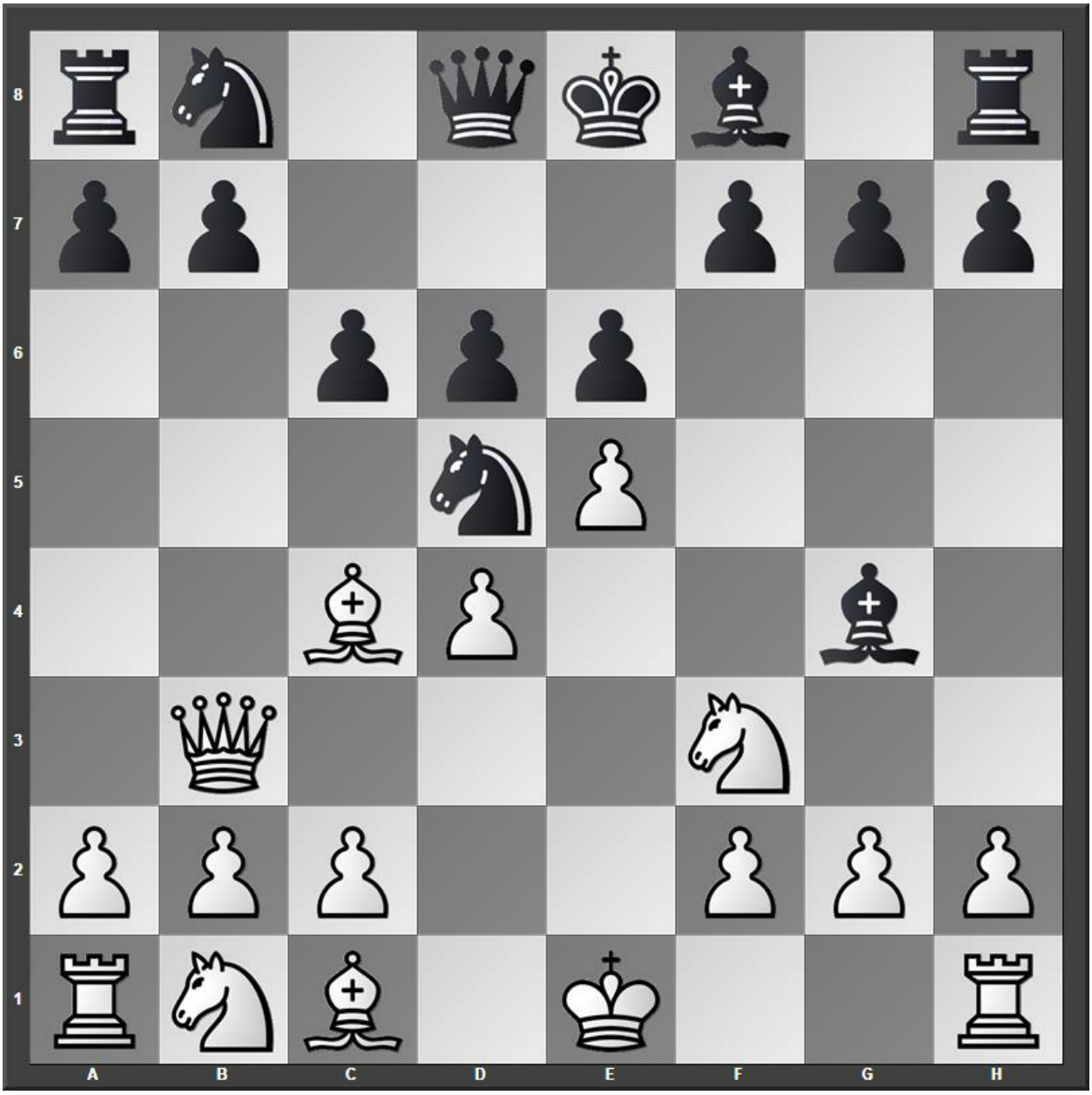
5.Be2 is more common.

**5...c6**

Or 5...e6 with chances for both sides.

**6.Qd3 e6**

**7.Qb3**



**7…Nb6**

Maybe 7...Bxf3 gives Black an edge, but it's complicated.

**8.Bf4 Nxc4**

**9.Qxc4 d5**

**10.Qb3 Qc8**

**11.Nc3 Be7**

**12.Na4 0–0**

**13.Nc5 b6**

**14.Na4 c5**

Or 14...Qa6 which looks good for Black.

**15.c4 dxc4**

**16.Qxc4 Bxf3**

If 16...Qc6 17.dxc5 b5 and Black wins a knight.

**17.gxf3 cxd4**

If 17...Qc6 18.Rg1 Rd8 Black threatens to win material.

Now if 18.Qxd4 Nc6 19.Qe4 Rd8 and Black stands better.

**18.Qxc8 Rxc8**

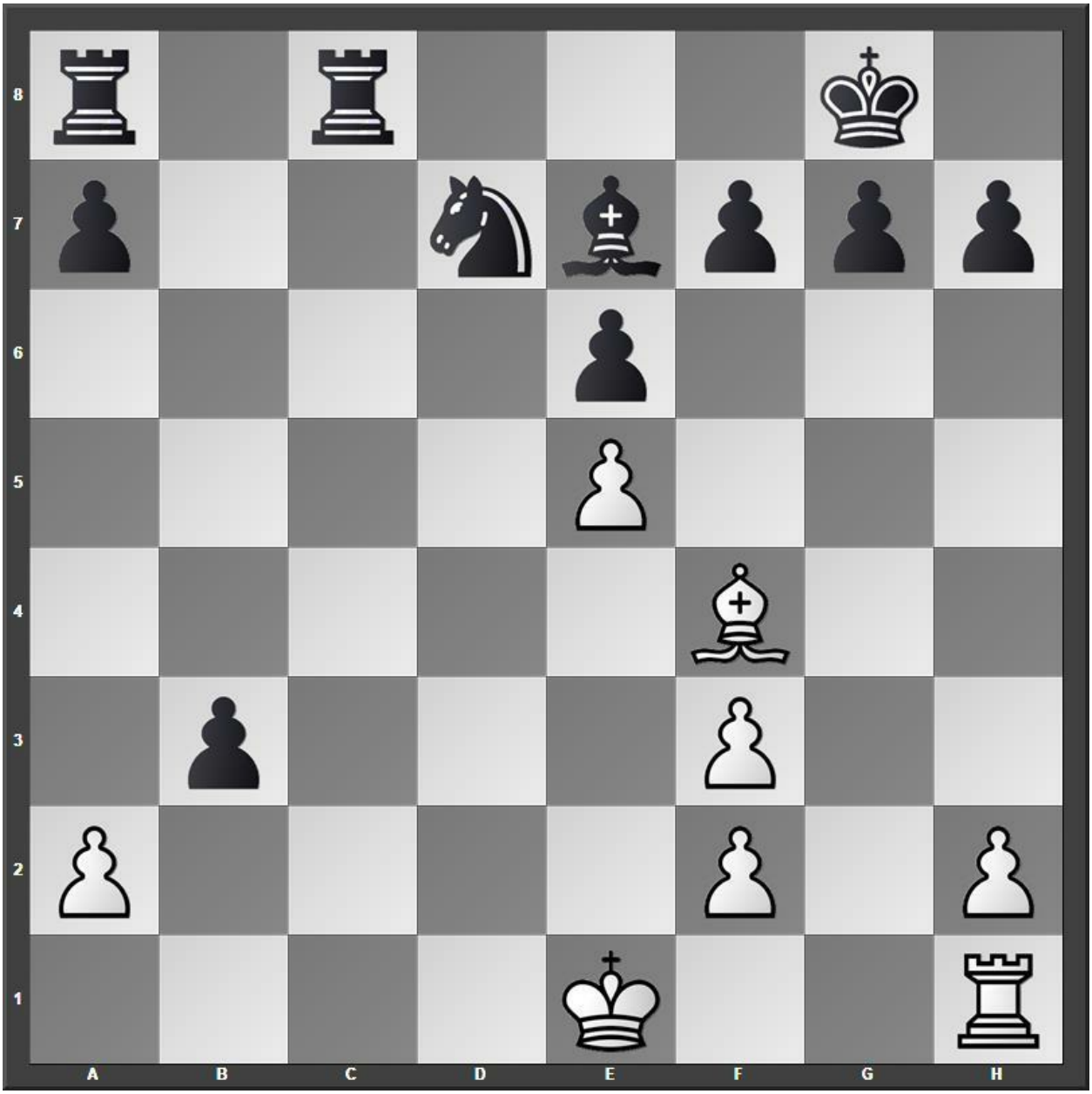
**19.Rd1 b5**

White's knight is trapped.

**20.Rxd4 bxa4**

**21.Rd7 Nxd7**

**22.b3 axb3**



Or 23.axb3 Nxe5 24.Bxe5 Rc1+ and Black wins.

**23.Ke2 b2**

Now my opponent blunders in a lost position.

**24.Rc1 bxc1Q 0–1**

White resigns

## Game 9 – B05 [4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be2 c6]

Guest - Sawyer, Chess.com, 17.11.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

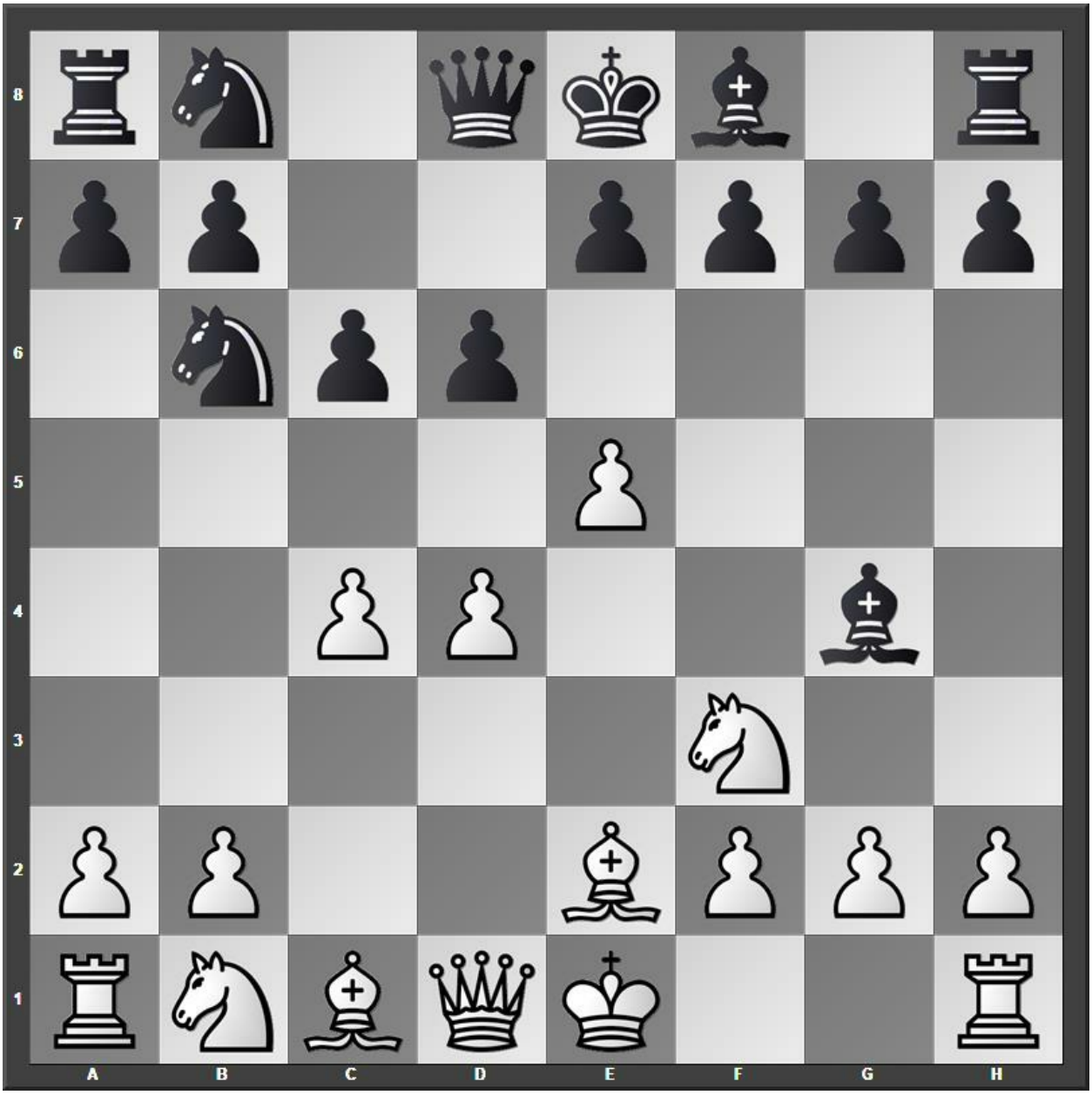
**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.Nf3 Bg4**

**5.Be2 c6**

**6.c4 Nb6**

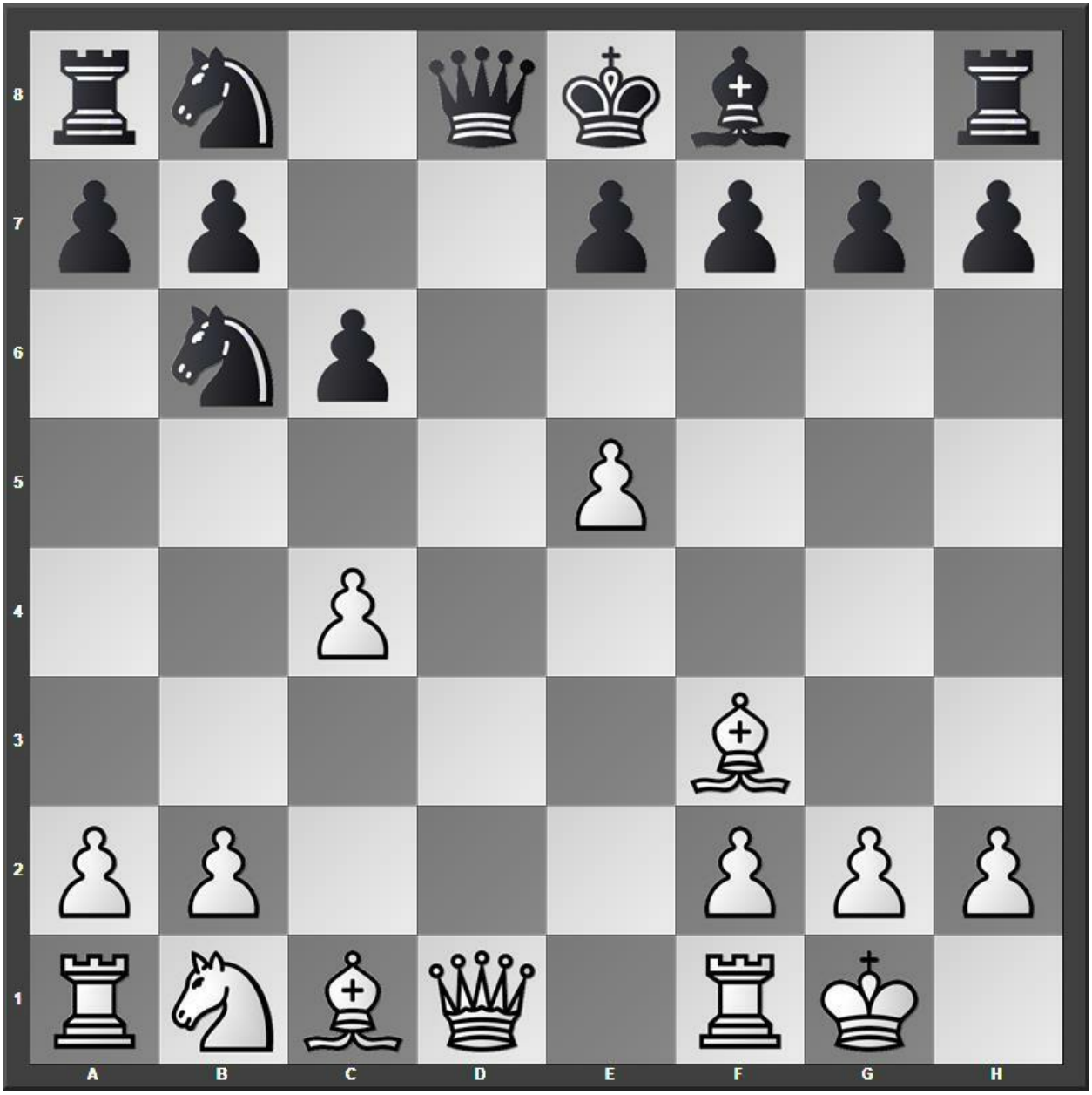


The aggressive e5 and c4 pawns can become vulnerable.

**7.0–0 Bxf3**

**8.Bxf3 dxe5**

**9.dxe5**



**9…e6**

To stop 10.e6, but I had 9...Qxd1 10.Rxd1 Nxc4 winning.

**10.Qxd8+ Kxd8**

**11.Nc3**

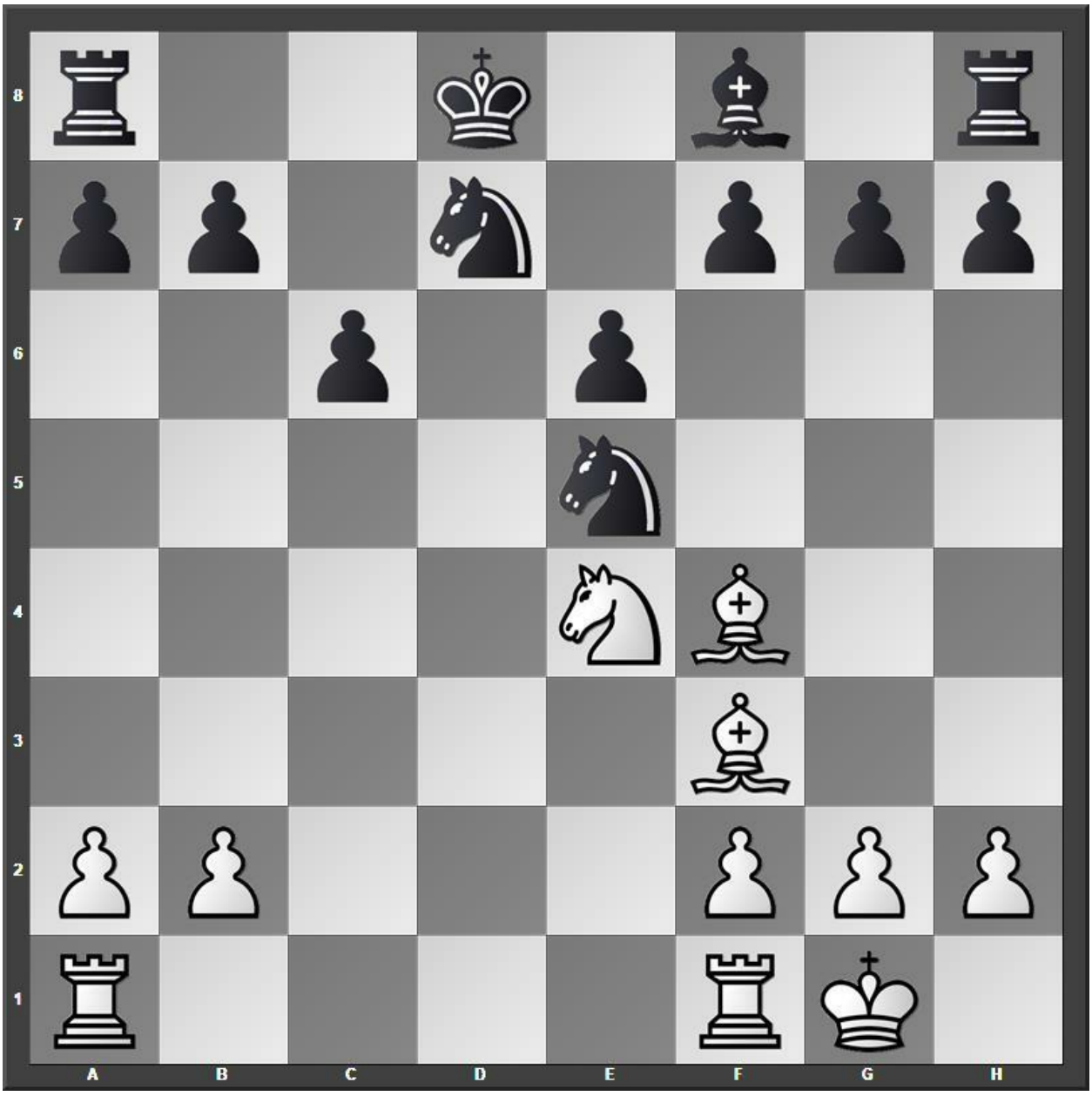
If White defends c4 with 11.Be2 N8d7 the position is equal.

**11...Nxc4**

I don't miss the free c4 pawn this time around.

**12.Bf4 Nd7**

**13.Ne4 Ncxe5**



Black wins a second pawn on e5. White has compensation for about one pawn, but not enough for two pawns.

**14.Bxe5 Nxe5**

**15.Rad1+ Ke8**

If 15...Kc7 Black stands better.

**16.Be2 Rd8**

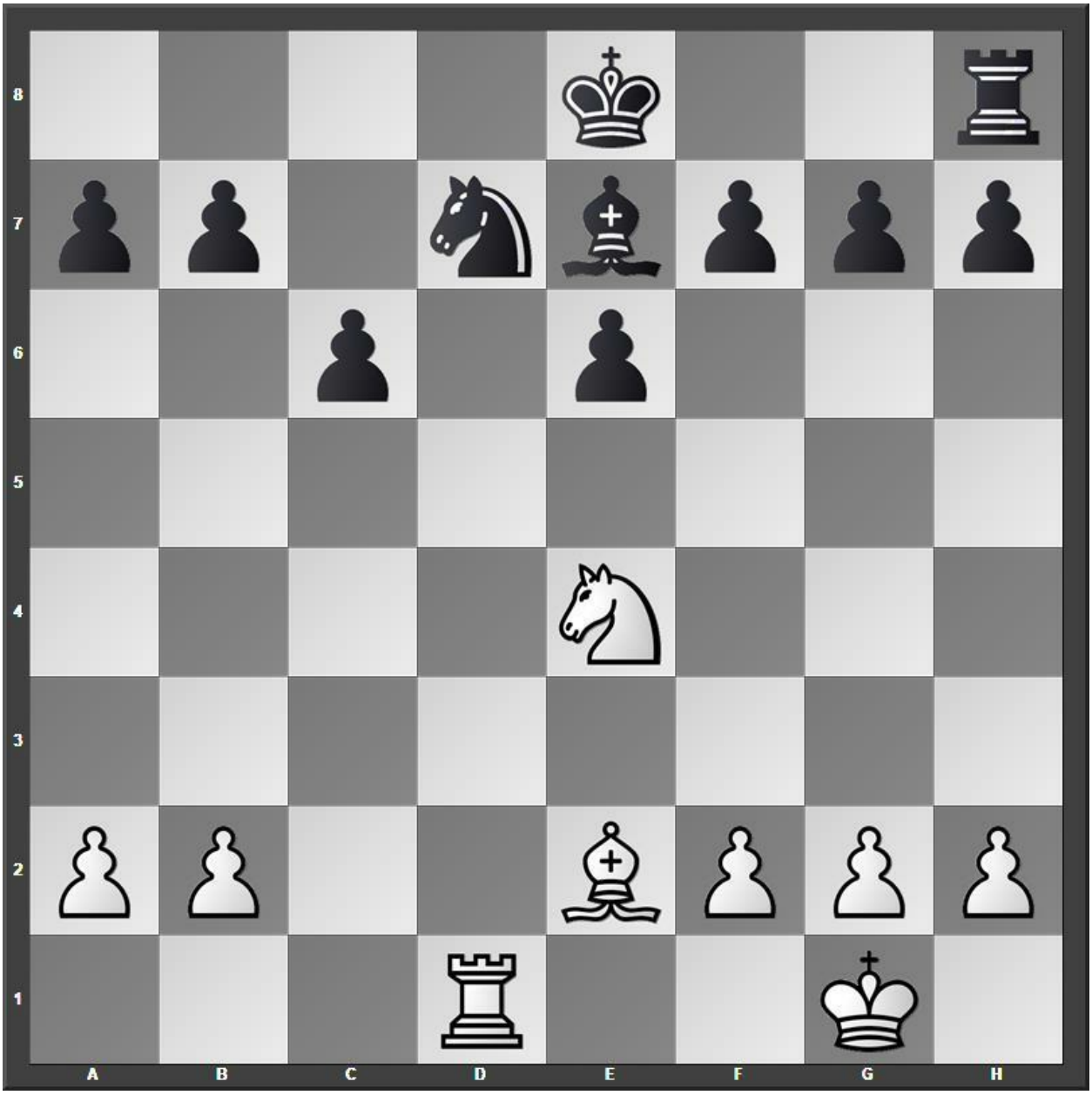
**17.Rxd8+ Kxd8**

**18.Ng5 Ke8**

18...h6 would relieve my king’s need to defend f7.

**19.Ne4 Be7**

**20.Rd1 Nd7**

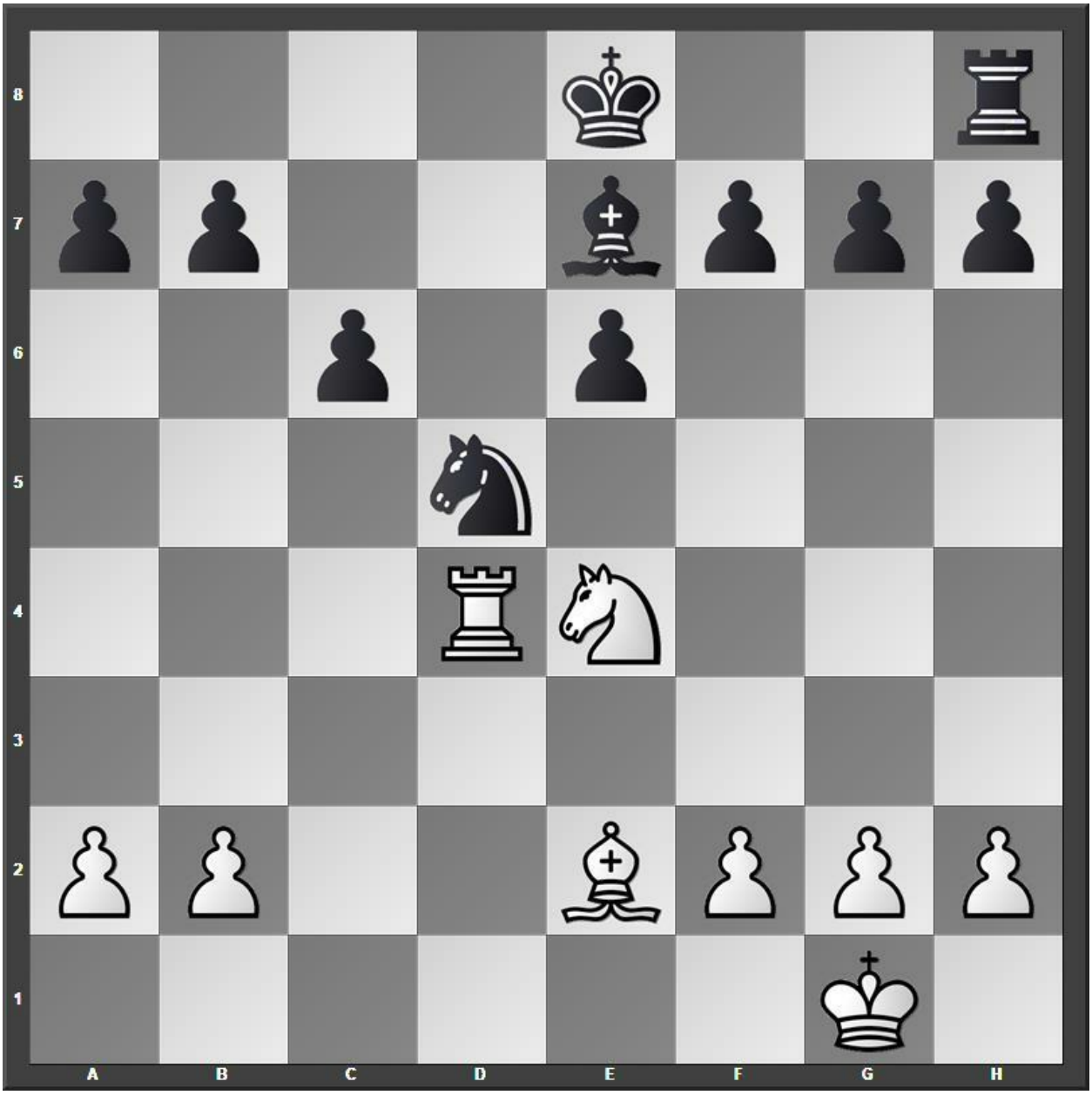


We started with 10 minutes each. Clocks: 7:02 - 8:01.

**21.Nc3 Nb6**

**22.Ne4 Nd5**

**23.Rd4**



**23…Bf6**

Stronger is 23...f5 24.Nc3 Nf6 and Black is up two pawns with an excellent position.

**24.Ra4 a6**

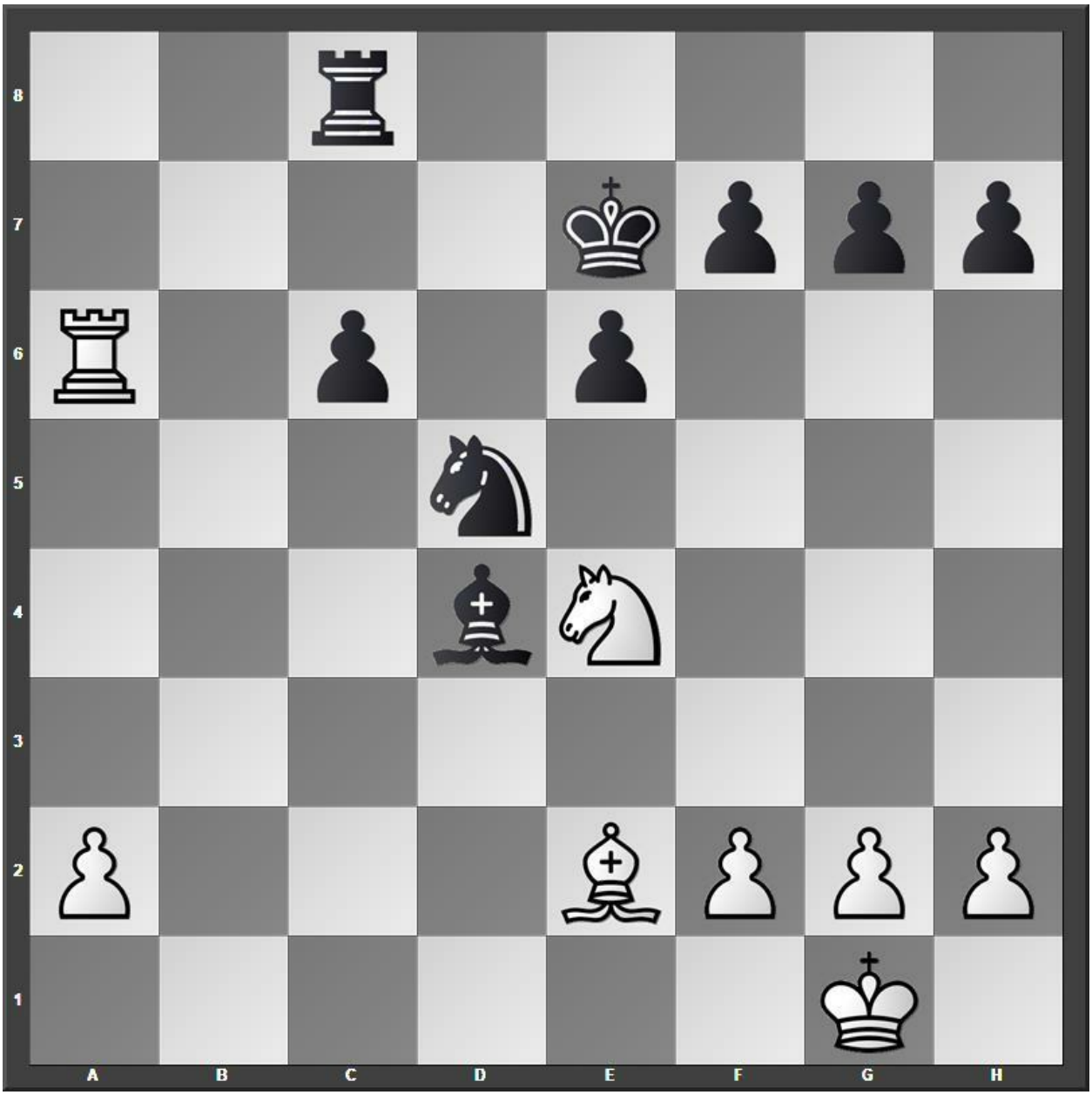
**25.Nd6+ Ke7**

**26.Nxb7 Bxb2**

**27.Rxa6 Rc8**

**28.Nc5 Bd4**

**29.Ne4**



**29…Rc7**

Better is 29...Rb8 30.Rxc6 Rb2 31.Bc4 f5 32.Ng3 Bxf2+ and Black is winning.

**30.g3 Nc3**

I made the strategy mistake of trading knights in view of a likely bishops of

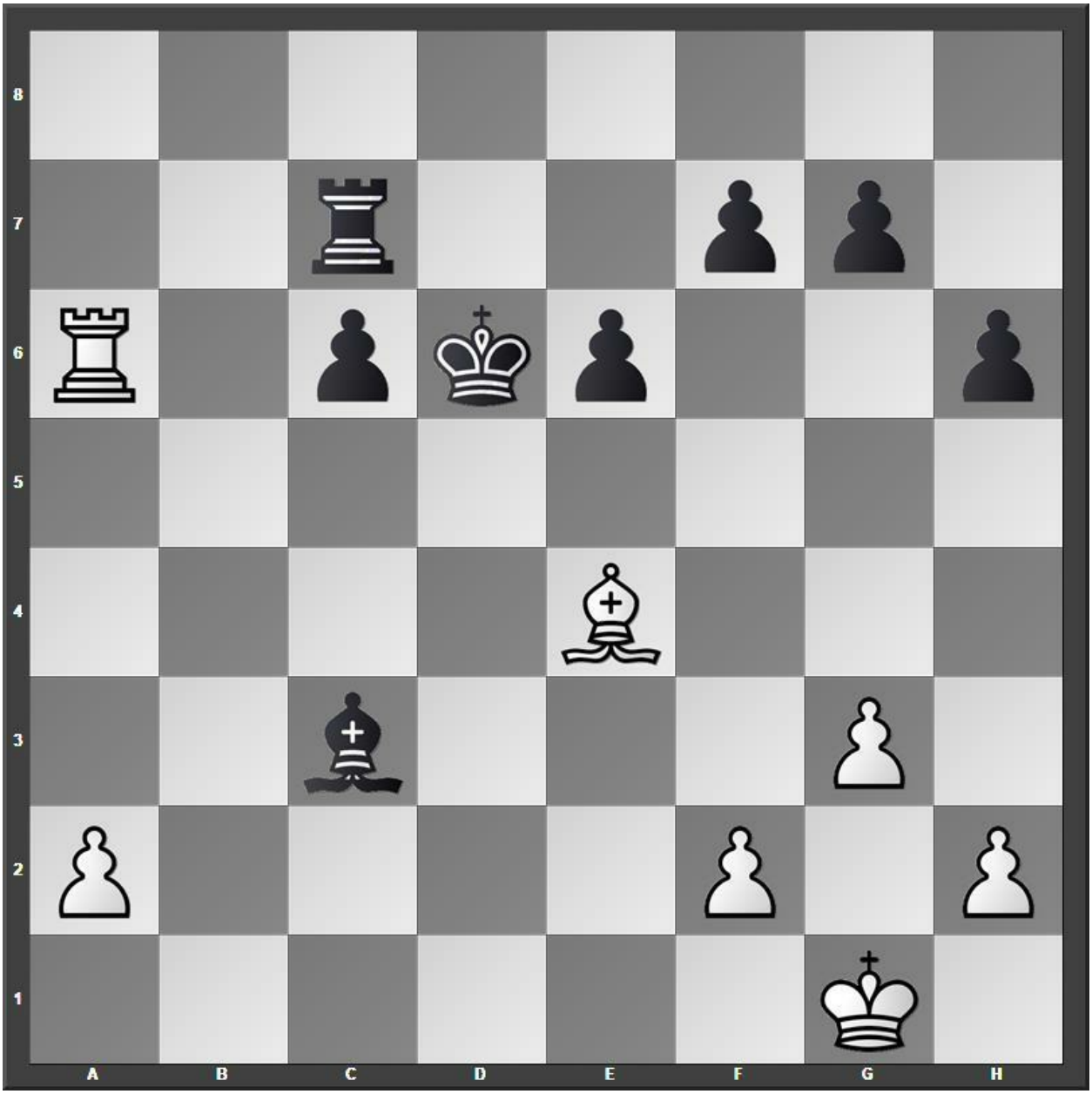
opposite color drawish endgame.

**31.Nxc3 Bxc3**

Clocks: 3:44 - 5:50.

**32.Bd3 h6**

**33.Be4 Kd6**



**34.h4 Bd4**

**35.Kg2 f5**

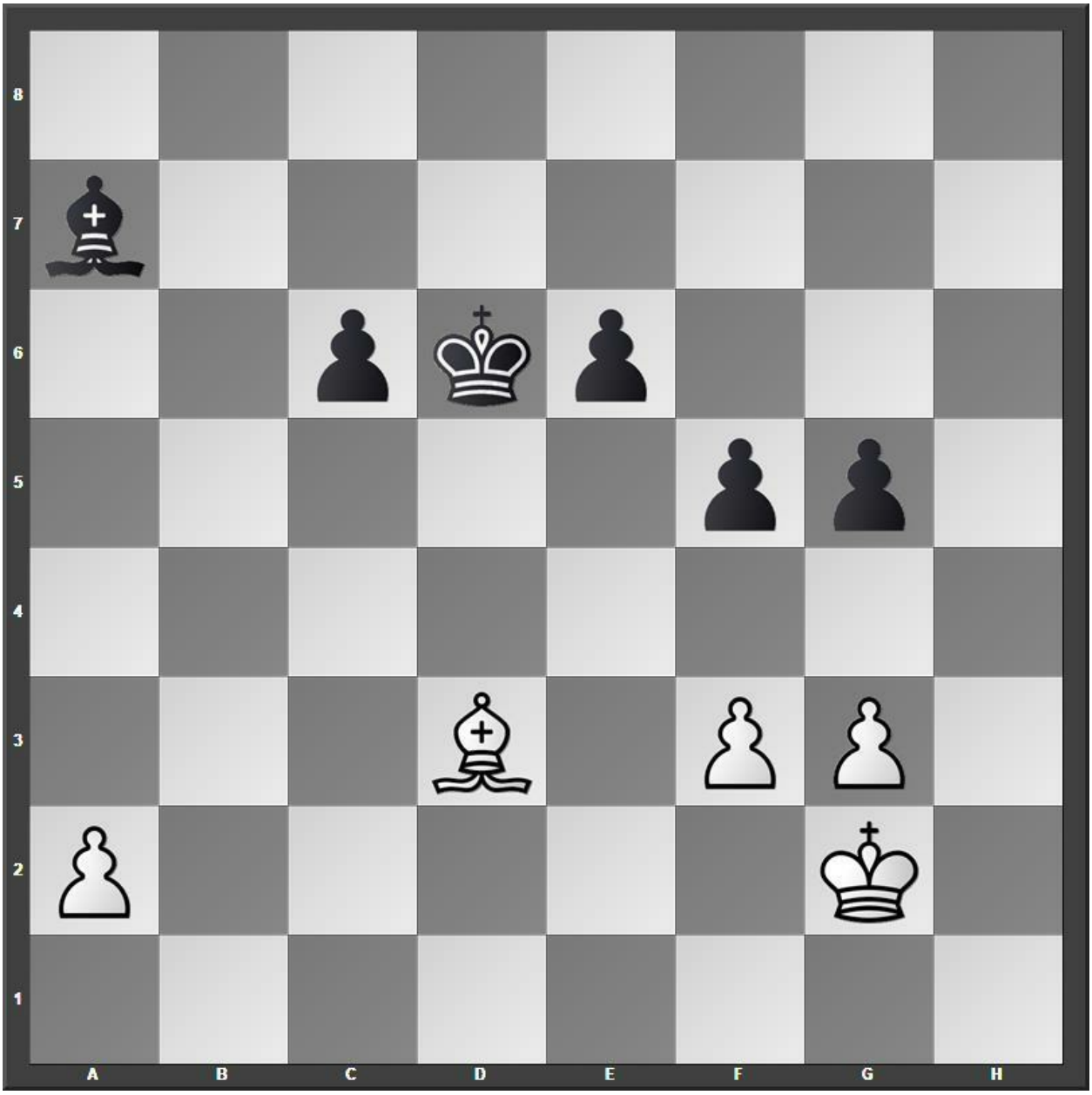
**36.Bd3 Ra7**

**37.Rxa7 Bxa7**

Clocks: 2:09 - 5:30.

**38.f3 g5**

**39.hxg5 hxg5**



**40.Kh3 Kd5**

**41.g4 f4**

**42.Bg6**

If 42.Be4+ Kd6 43.Kg2 c5 44.Kf2 c4+ 45.Ke2 White draws.

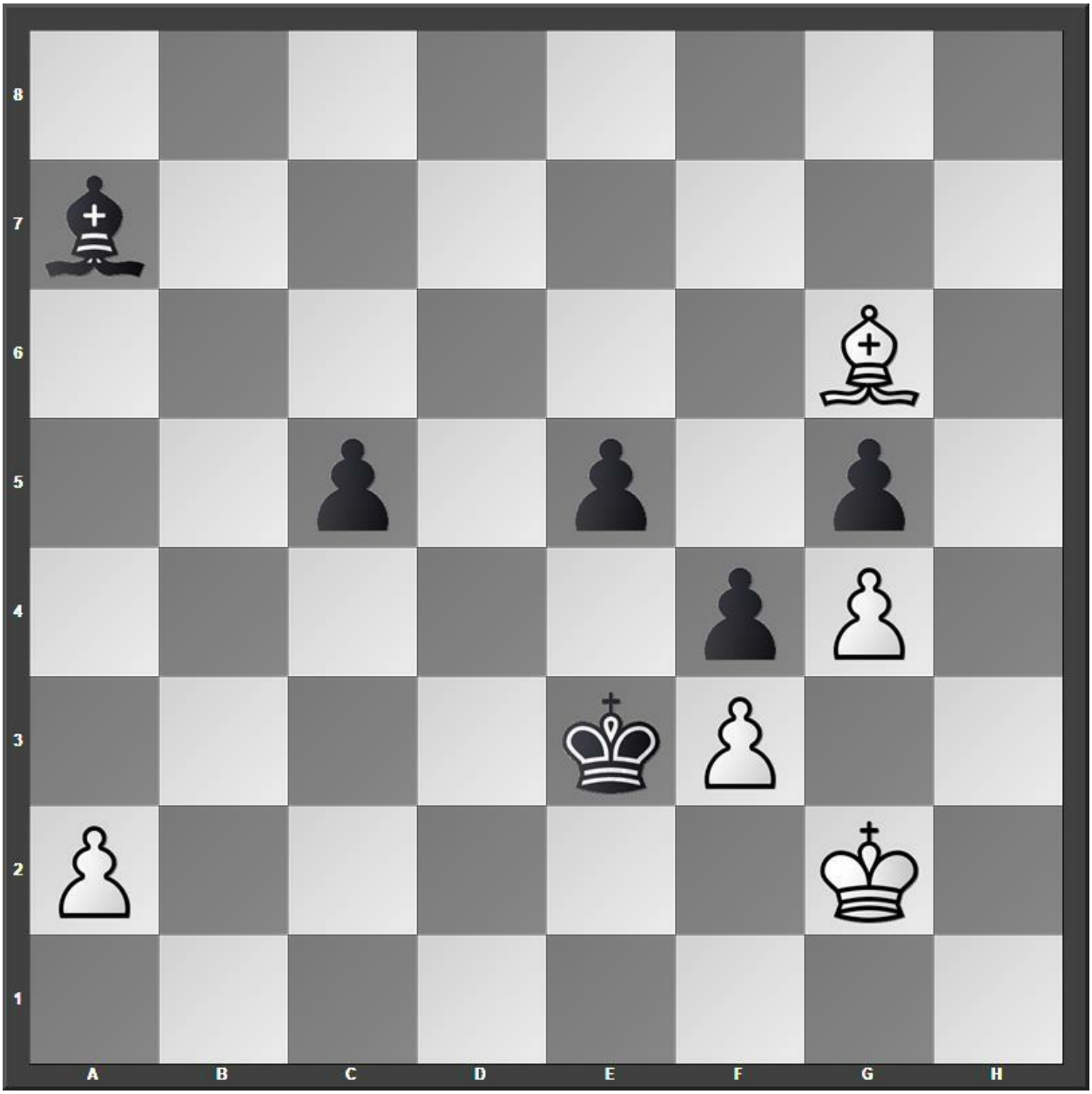
**42...Kd4**

Clocks: 1:38 - 5:00.

**43.Bf7 e5**

**44.Bg6 c5**

**45.Kg2 Ke3**



**46.Kf1**

White loses another pawn, but if 46.Bf7 e4 47.fxe4 Kxe4 and Black wins with two passed pawns.

**46...Kxf3**

**47.Ke1 Kxg4**

**48.Kd2 Kf3**

**49.Kc3 c4**

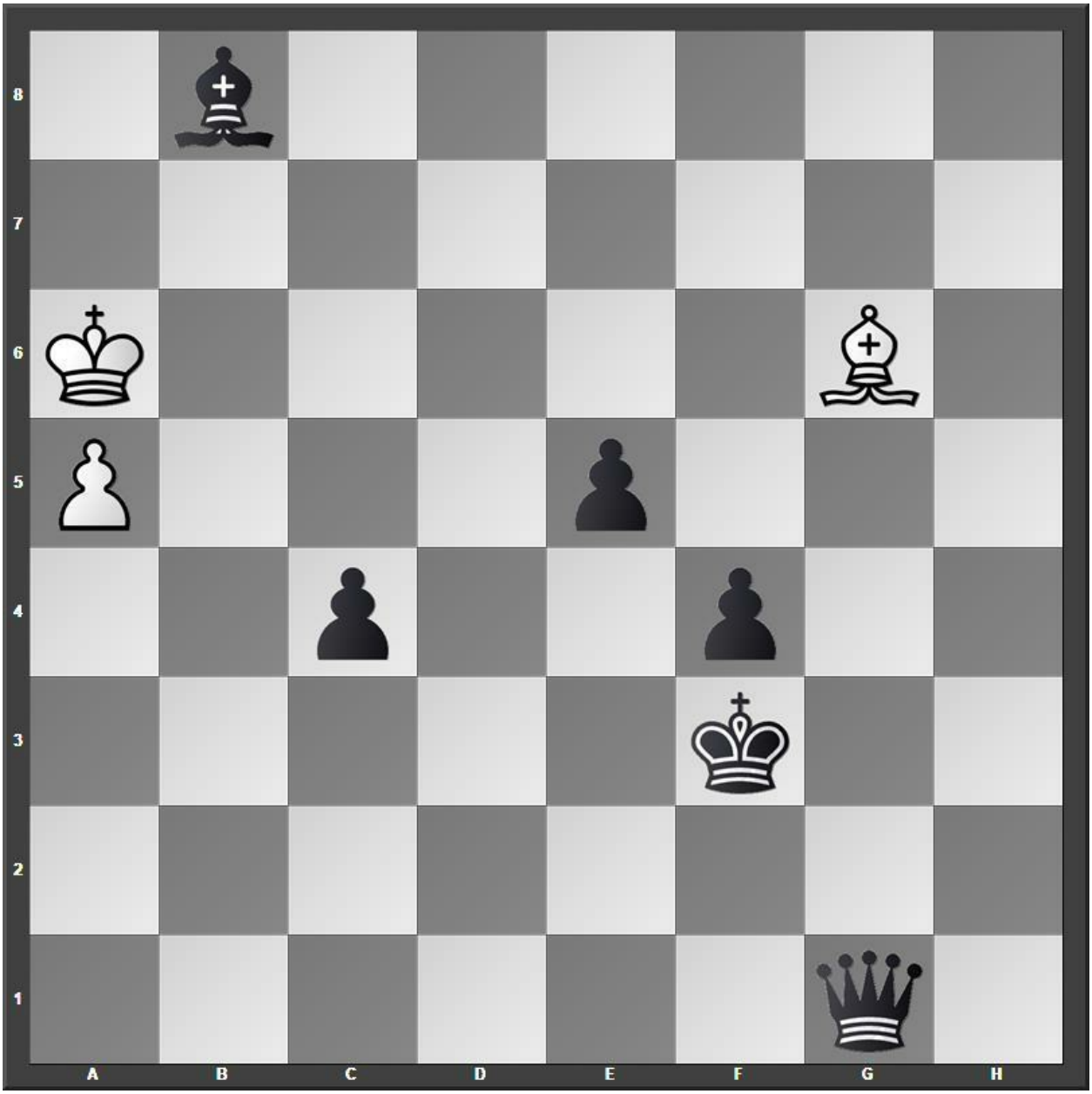
**50.a4 g4**

**51.Kb4 g3**

**52.a5 g2**

**53.Kb5 g1Q**

**54.Ka6 Bb8 0–1**




Final clocks: 0:04 - 4:21.

White resigns with four seconds left on the clock

## Game 10 – B05 [4.exd6 exd6 5.Nf3 Be7]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 07.10.2021

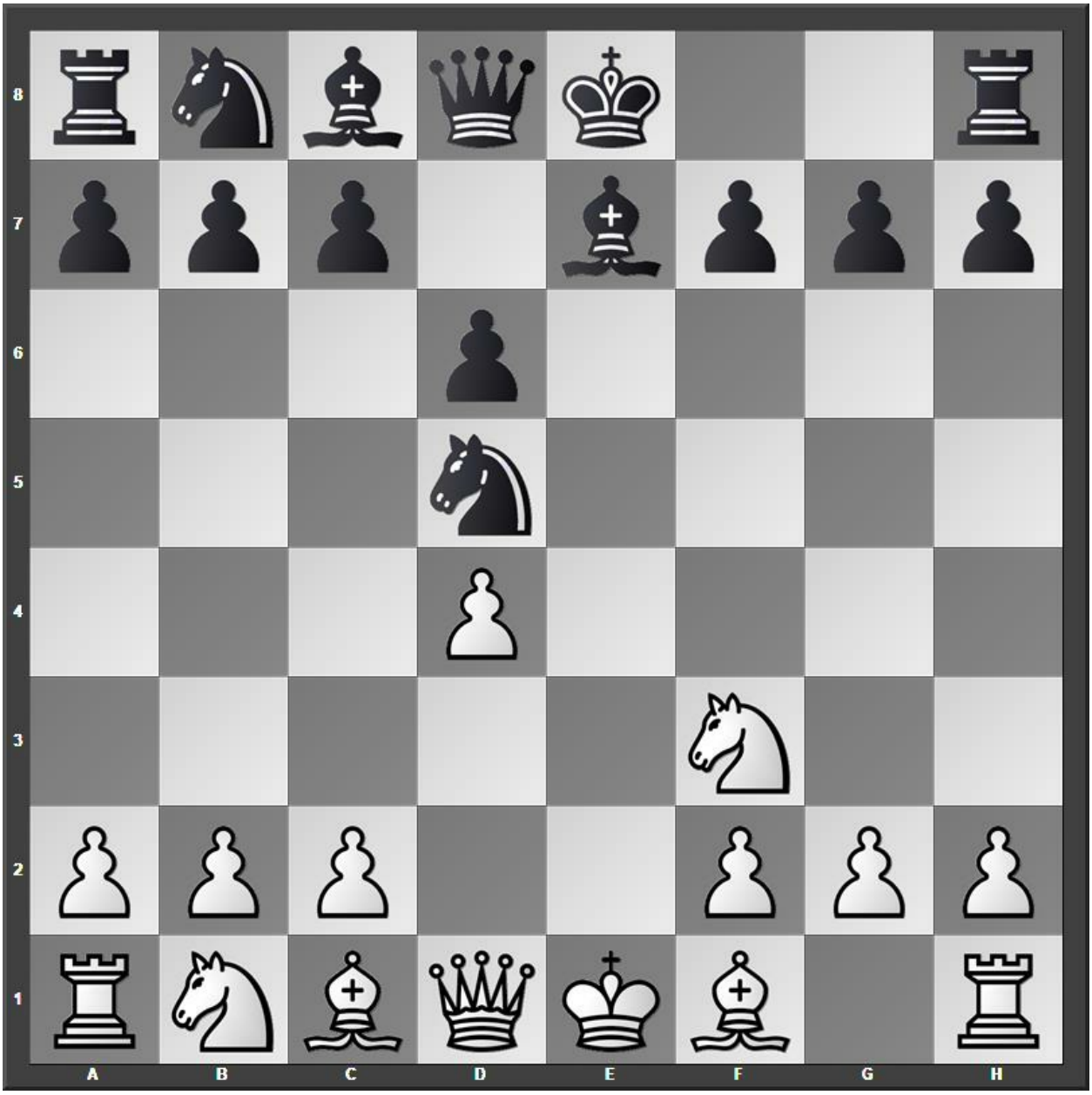
**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.exd6 exd6**

**5.Nf3 Be7**



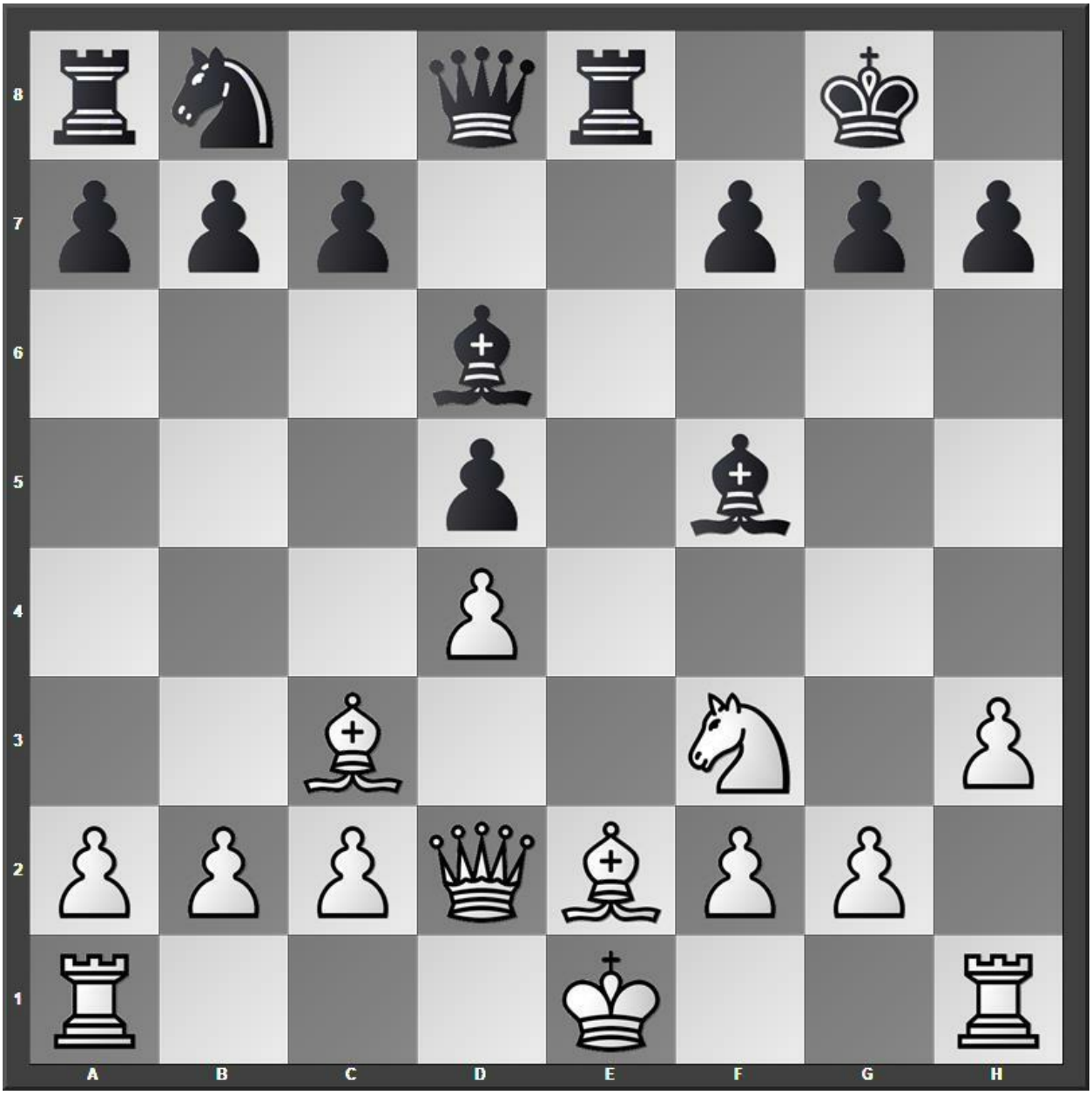
White delays c4. Now if 6.c4 Black has 6…Nf6 or 6...Nb6.

**6.Bd2 0–0**

**7.Nc3 Nxc3**

**8.Bxc3 Re8**

**9.Be2 d5**



**10.h3 Bf5**

**11.Qd2 Bd6**

**12.0–0–0 Nd7**

**13.a3 Nf6**

**14.Kb1 Ne4**

**15.Qe1 Nxc3+**

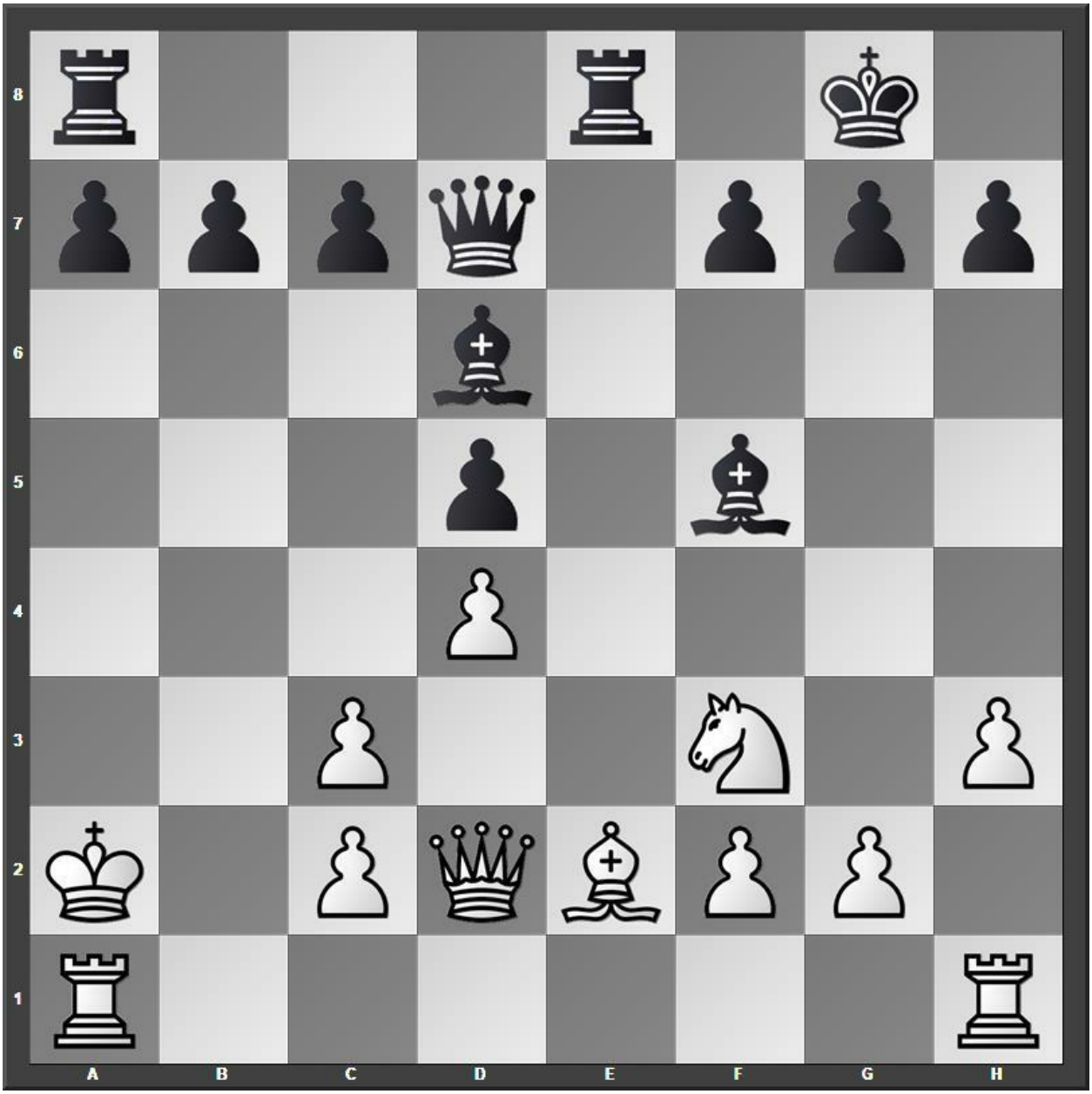
Now if 16.Qxc3 Rxe2 and Black wins a piece.

**16.bxc3 Bxa3**

**17.Ka2 Bd6**

**18.Qd2 Qd7**

**19.Ra1**



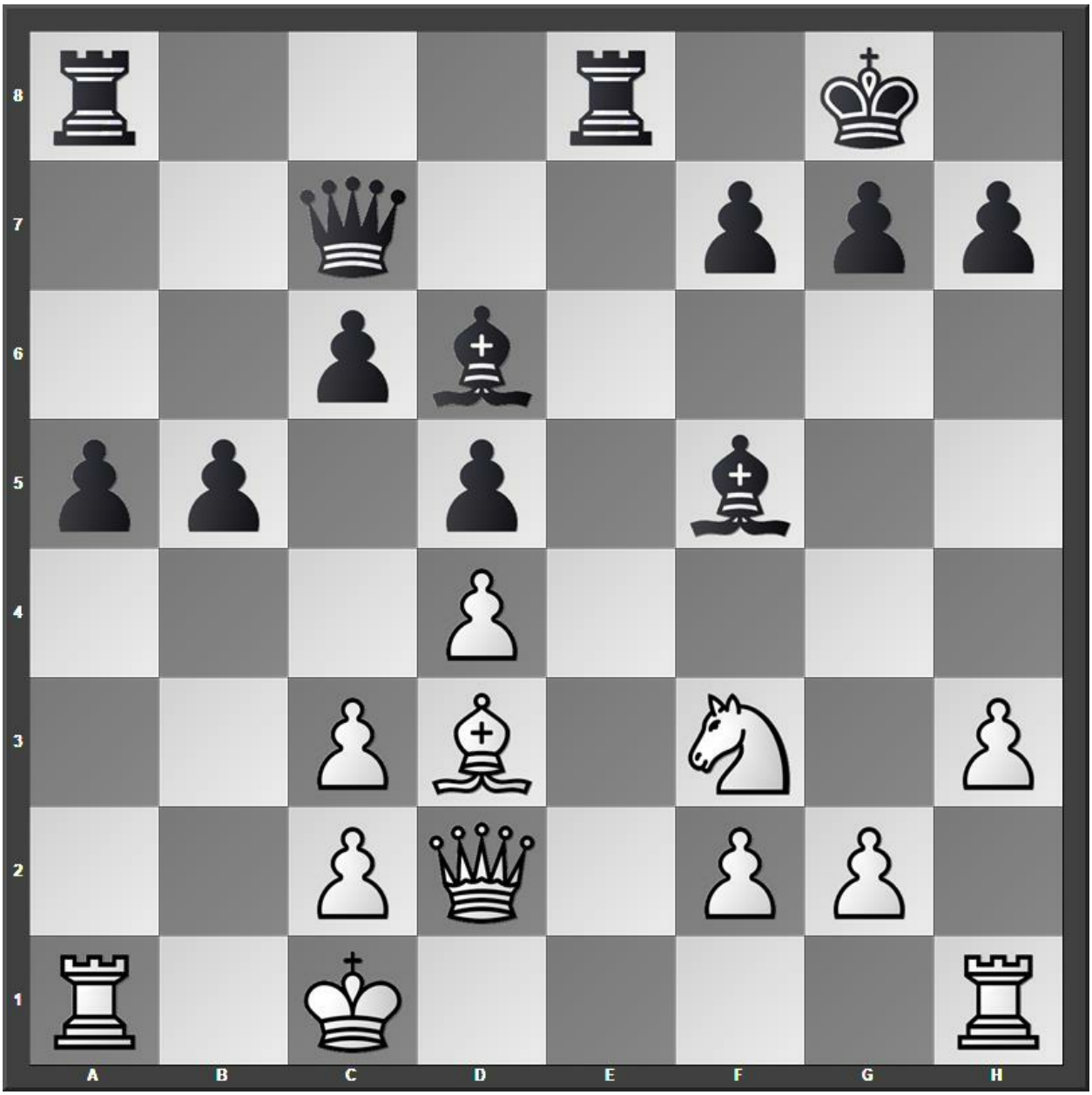
**19…b5**

A powerful shot is 19...Bf4 20.Qxf4 Qa4+ 21.Kb2 Qxc2+ 22.Ka3 Qxc3+ 23.Ka2 Rxe2+ with mate in a few moves.

**20.Kb1 a5**

**21.Kc1 c6**

**22.Bd3 Qc7**



**23.Bxf5**

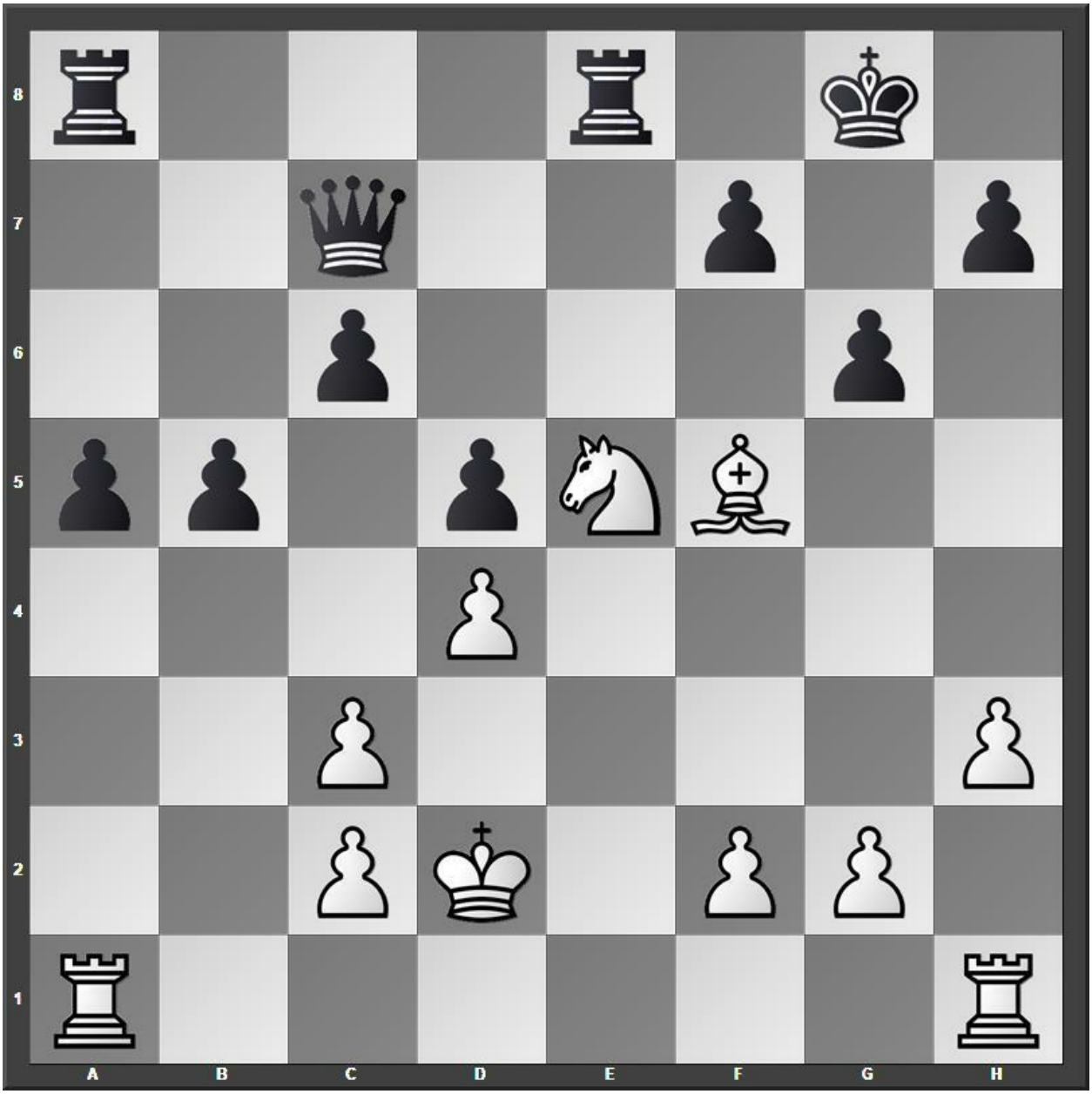
White could avoid the f4 bishop pin of the d2 queen to the king by 23.g3 Bd7

when Black attacks on the queenside.

**23...Bf4**

**24.Ne5 Bxd2+**

**25.Kxd2 g6**



White has lost a queen but plays on until mate.

**26.Bg4 c5**

**27.Rab1 f5**

**28.Bf3 Qb7**

**29.h4 c4**

**30.h5 Kg7**

**31.hxg6 hxg6**

**32.g4 Rh8**

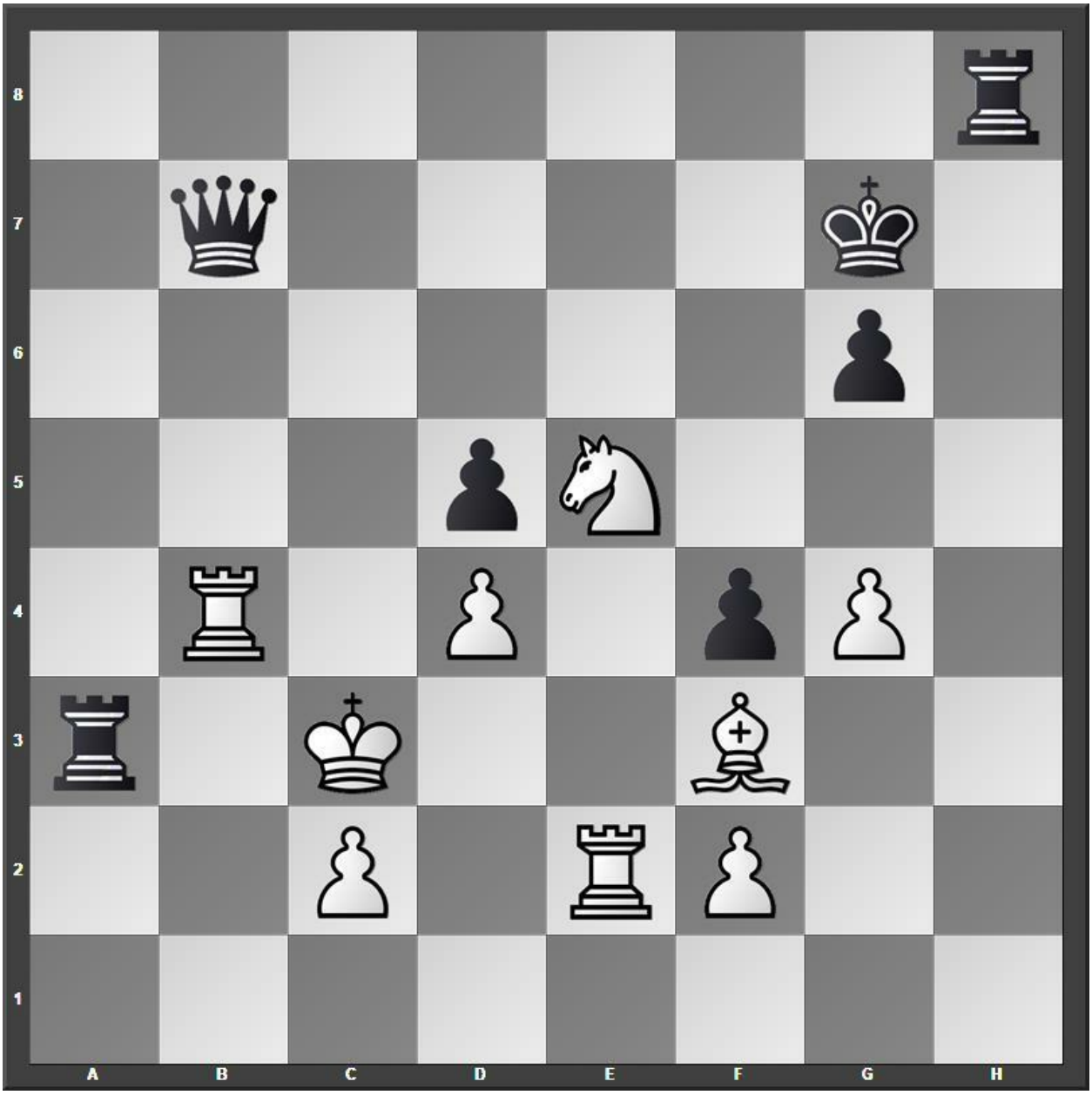
**33.Rhe1 f4**

**34.Re2 b4**

**35.cxb4 c3+**

**36.Kxc3 axb4+**

**37.Rxb4 Ra3+**



**38.Kd2 Qxb4+**

**39.Kc1 Ra1# 0–1**

White is checkmated

## Game 11 – B05 [4.c4 Nb6 5.exd6 exd6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 06.10.2021

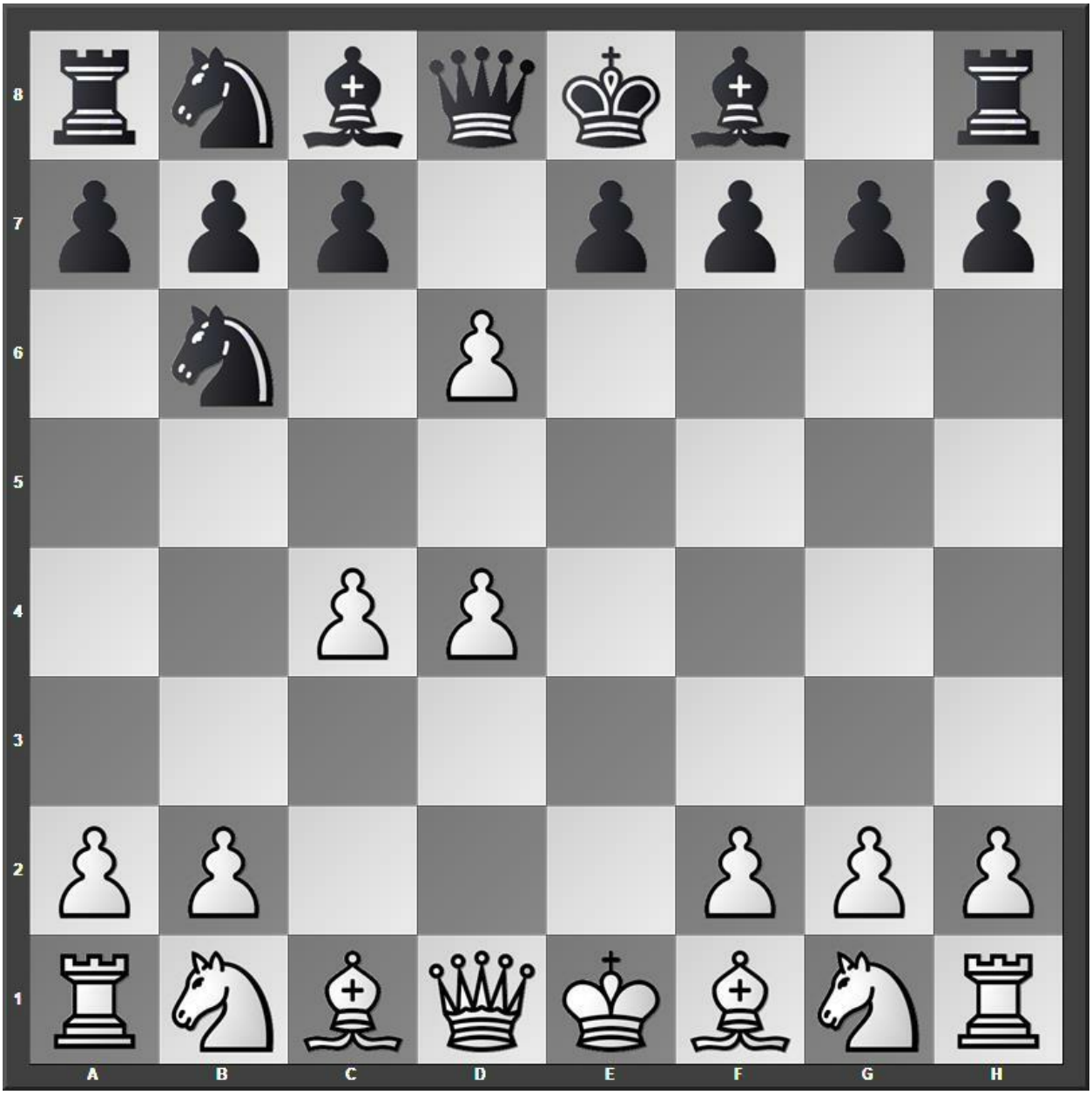
**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.c4 Nb6**

**4.d4 d6**

**5.exd6**



**5…exd6**

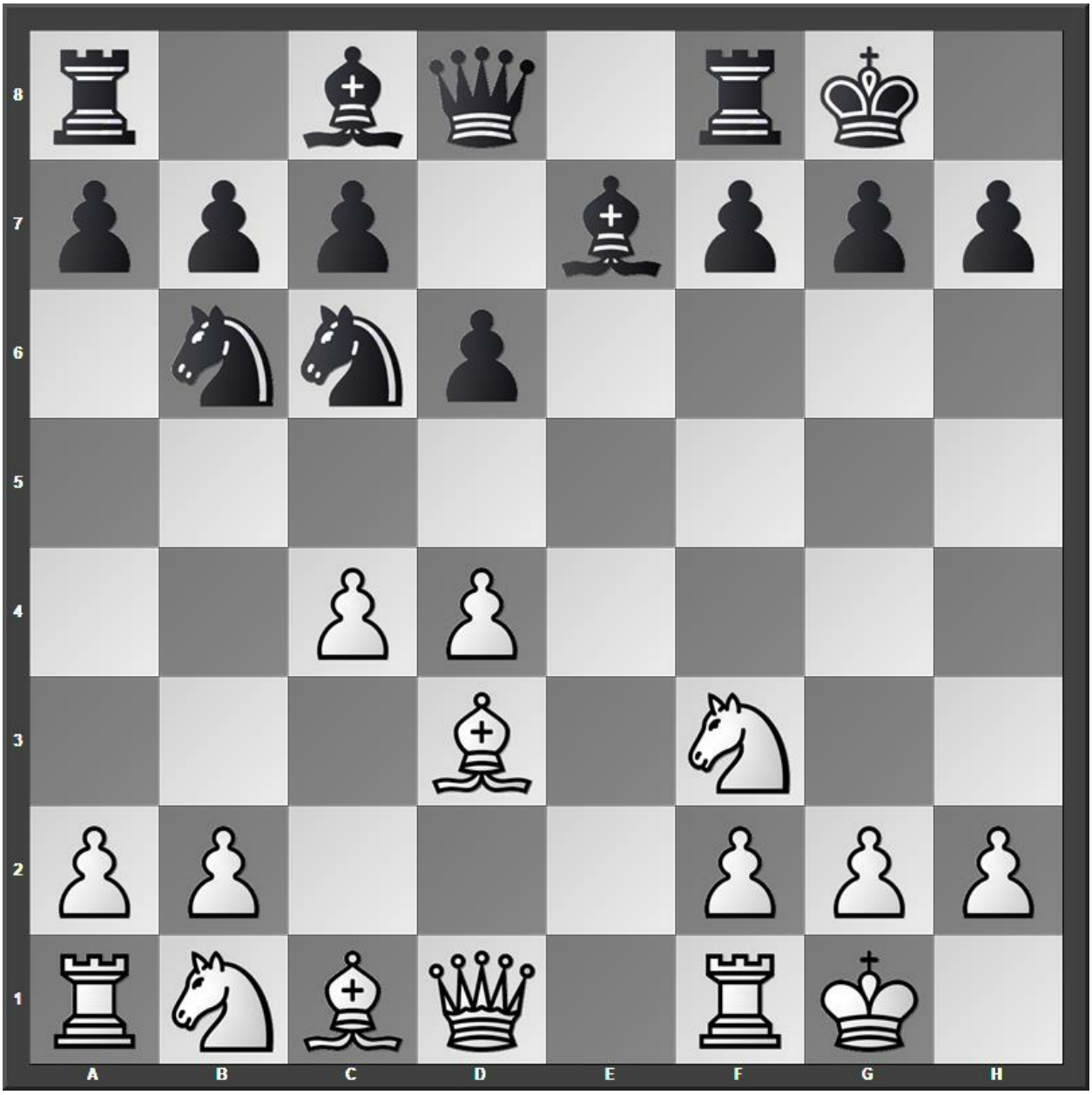
A sharp alternative is 5...cxd6 6.Nc3 g6 7.Be3 Bg7.

**6.Nf3 Be7**

My opponent’s next bishop move blocks the queen from protecting d4. White more often chooses 7.Be2 0–0 8.Nc3.

**7.Bd3 0–0**

**8.0–0 Nc6**



**9.a3 Bf6**

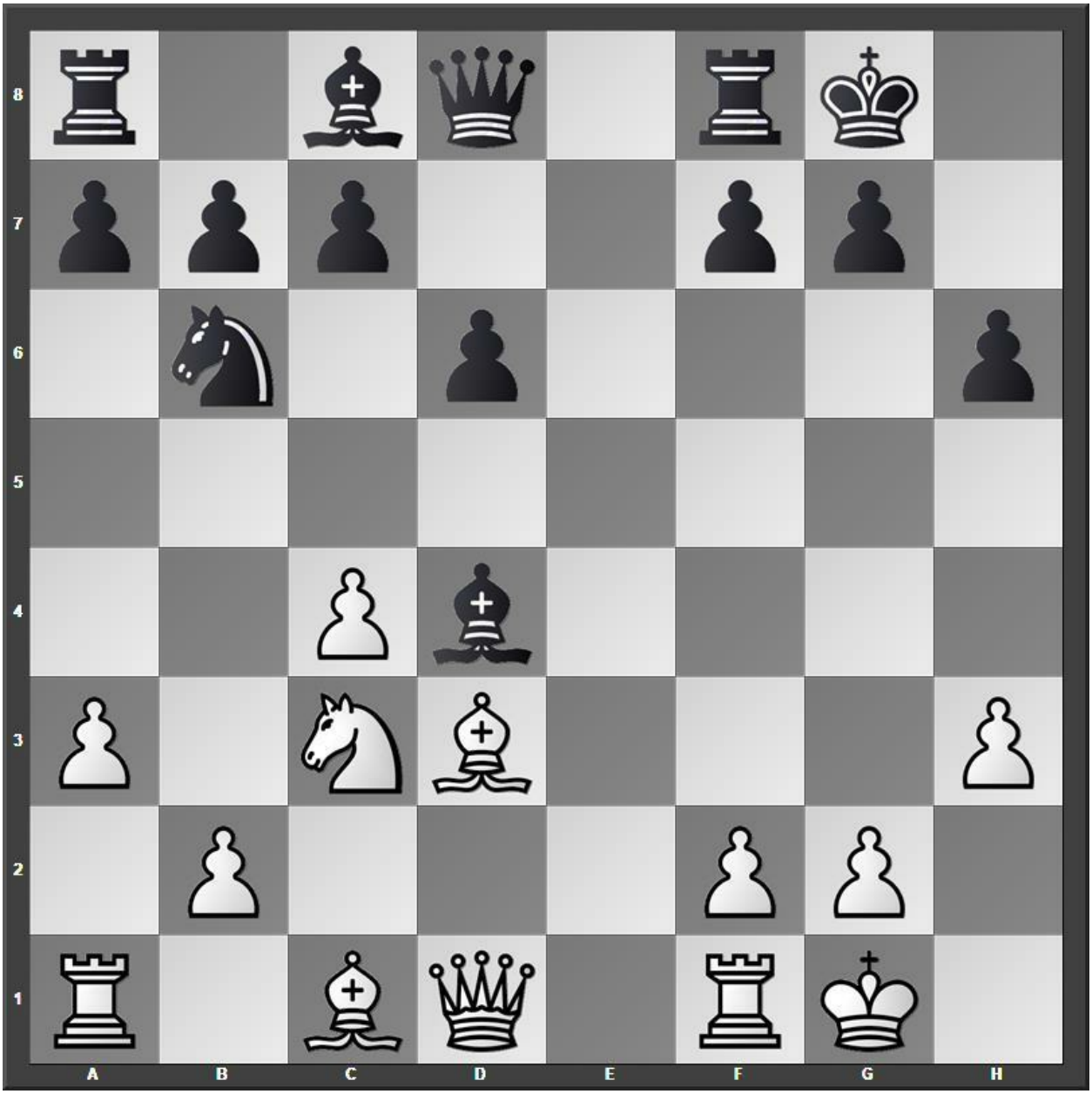
**10.Nc3 h6**

I avoided the trade of d4 for h7: 10...Nxd4 11.Nxd4 Bxd4 12.Bxh7+ Kxh7 13.Qxd4, but a better idea is 10...Bg4.

White could set a trap with 11.Bb1 Nxc4 12.Qd3 threatening Qh7 mate and Qxc4 winning.

**11.h3 Nxd4**

**12.Nxd4 Bxd4**



**13.Bf4 Bf6**

**14.Qf3 Re8**

**15.Rfe1 Be6**

**16.Qe4 g6**

If 17.Qxb7 Rb8 18.Qc6 Nd7 and both sides have chances.

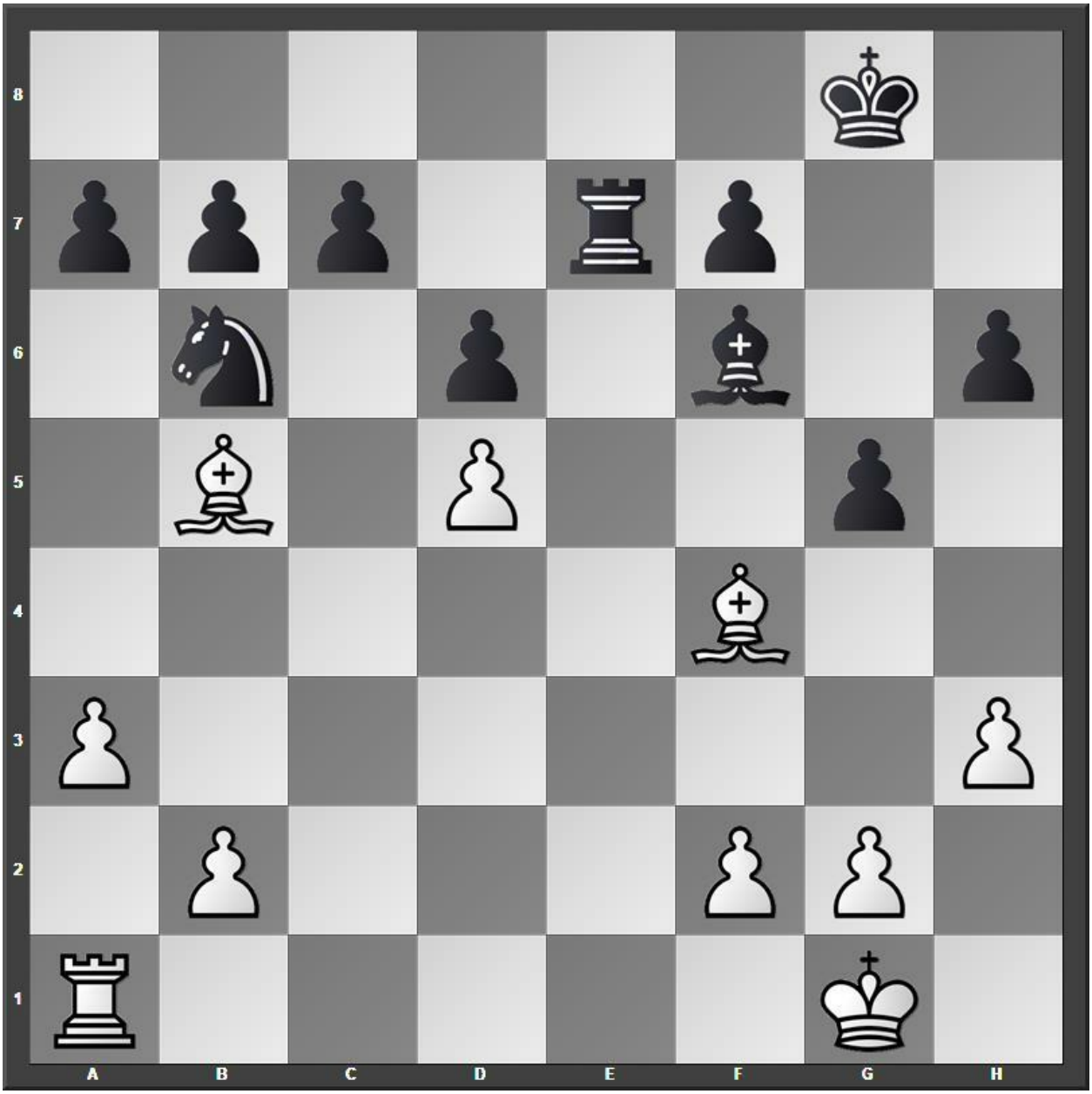
**17.Nd5 Bxd5**

**18.Qxe8+ Qxe8**

**19.Rxe8+ Rxe8**

**20.cxd5 g5**

**21.Bb5 Re7**



**22.Be3 Nxd5 0–1**

Black is up two pawns. Now my opponent gives up.

White resigns

## Game 12 – B05 [4.c4 Nb6 5.f4 d5]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 18.10.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

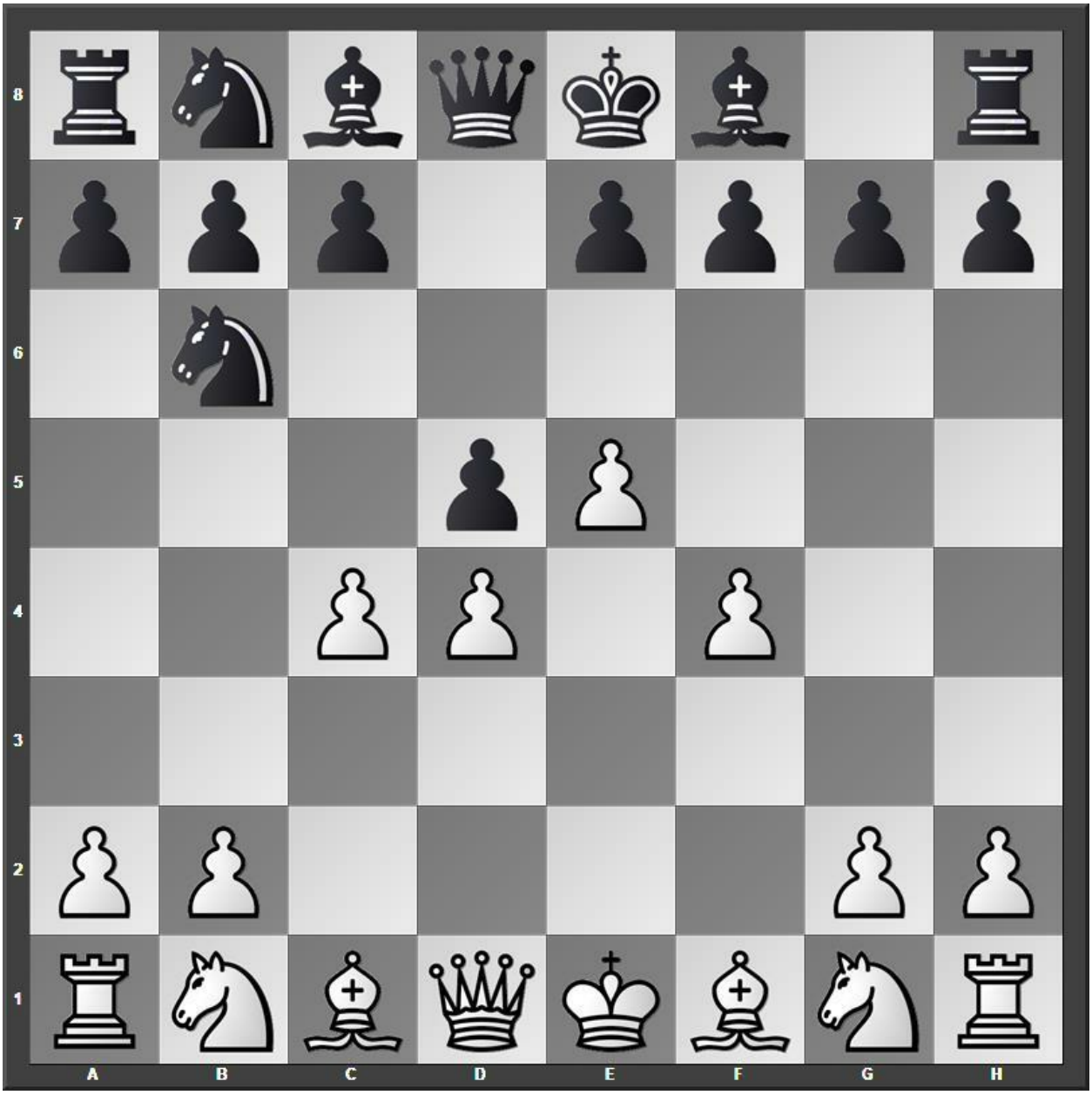
**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.c4 Nb6**

**5.f4 d5**

The main line is 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6.



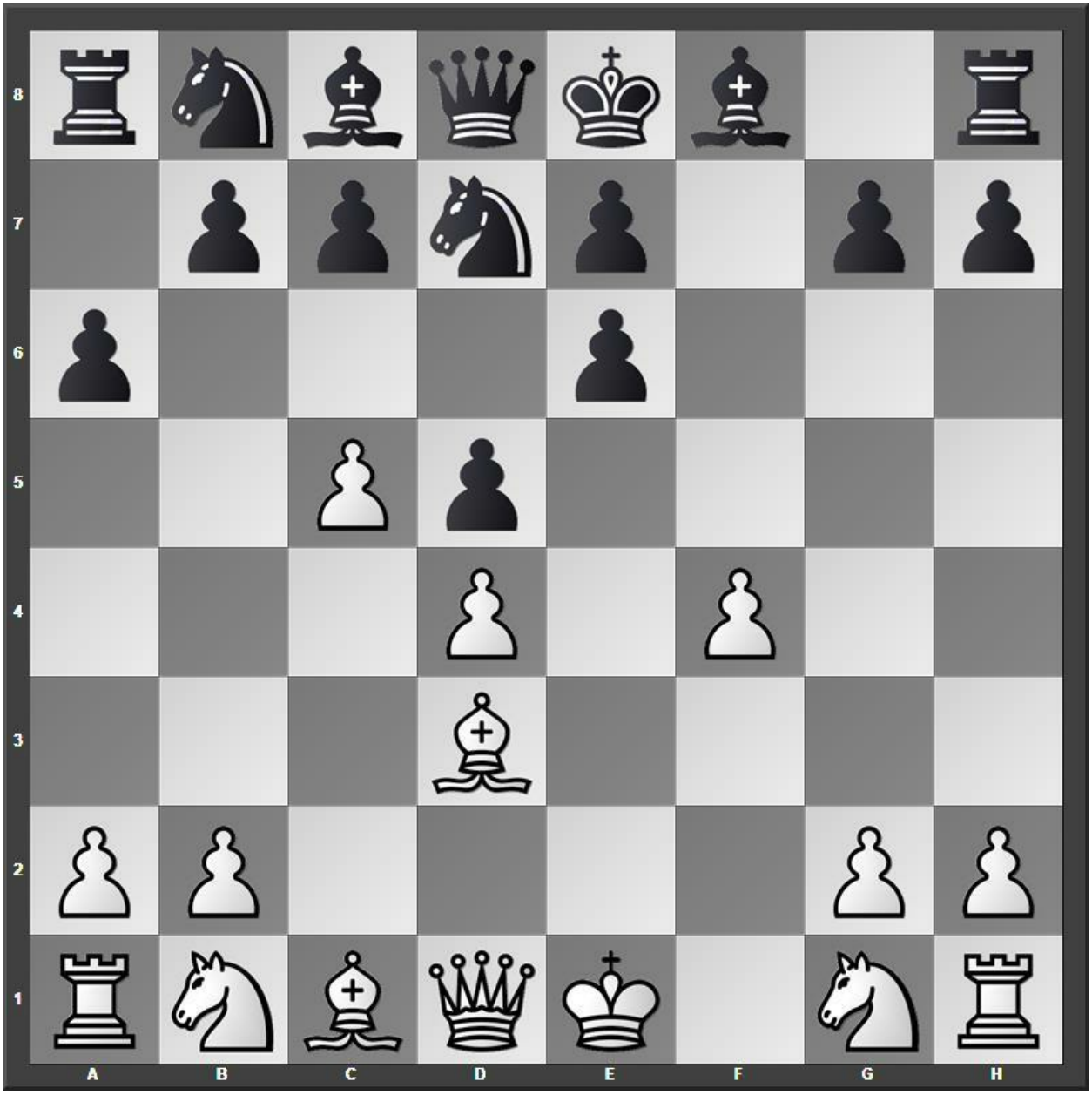
**6.c5 N6d7**

**7.Bd3 a6**

Or 7...e6 8.Nf3 White has a significant space advantage.

**8.e6 fxe6**

Now it's Fool's Mate. Better is 8...Nf6 9.exf7+ Kxf7 10.Nf3 when White is likely to play 11.Ne5+ with a strong attack.



**9.Qh5+ g6**

**10.Bxg6+ hxg6**

**11.Qxg6# 1–0**

Black is checkmated

# Chapter 3 – Alekhine 4.c4 Nb6 5.f4 dxe5

## Game 13 – B03 [6.fxe5 c6 7.Be3 Be6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 16.08.2021

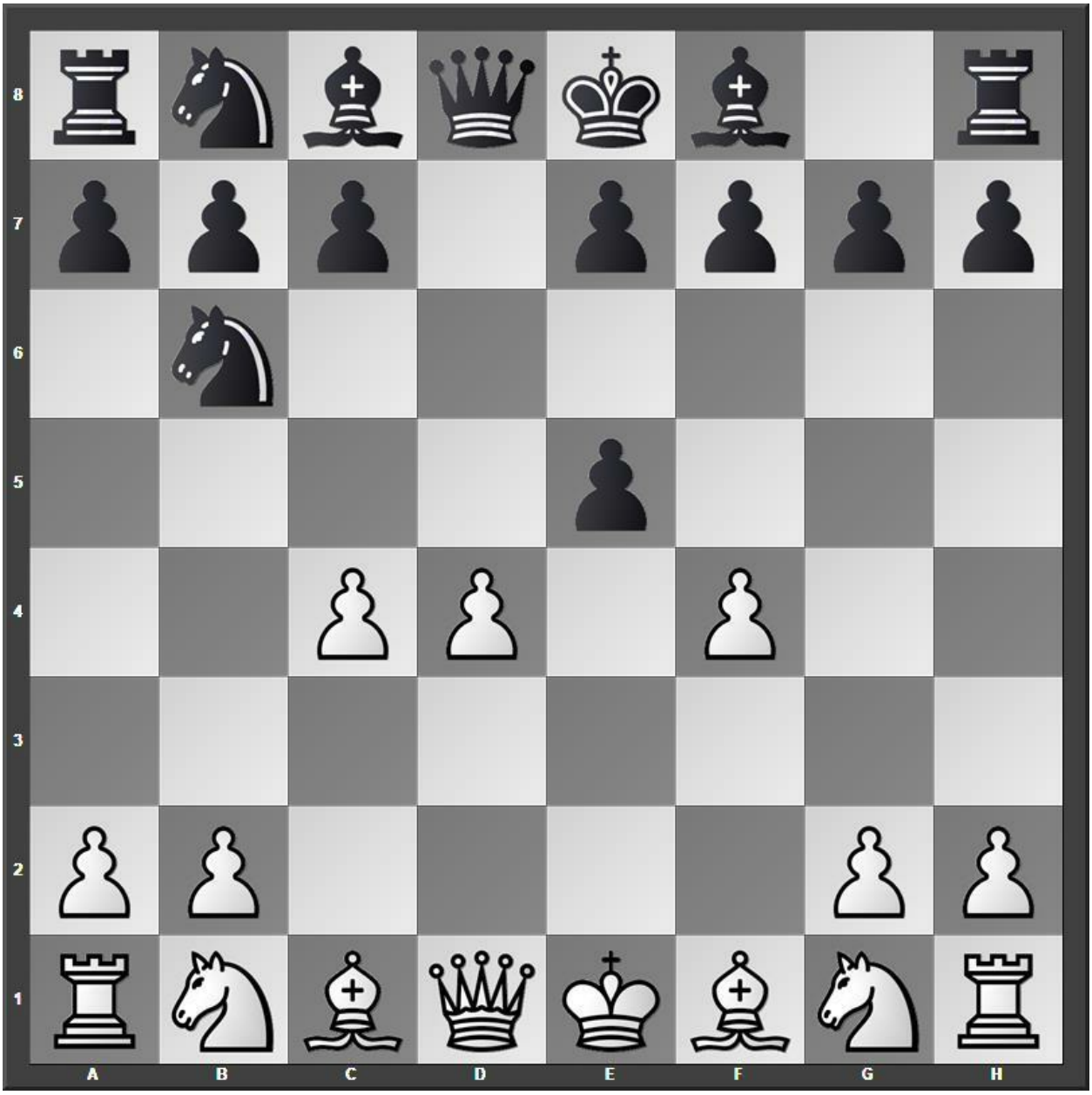
**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.c4 Nb6**

**5.f4 dxe5**



**6.fxe5 c6**

When I play this as Black, I attack d4 and e5 with 6...Nc6.

**7.Be3 Be6**

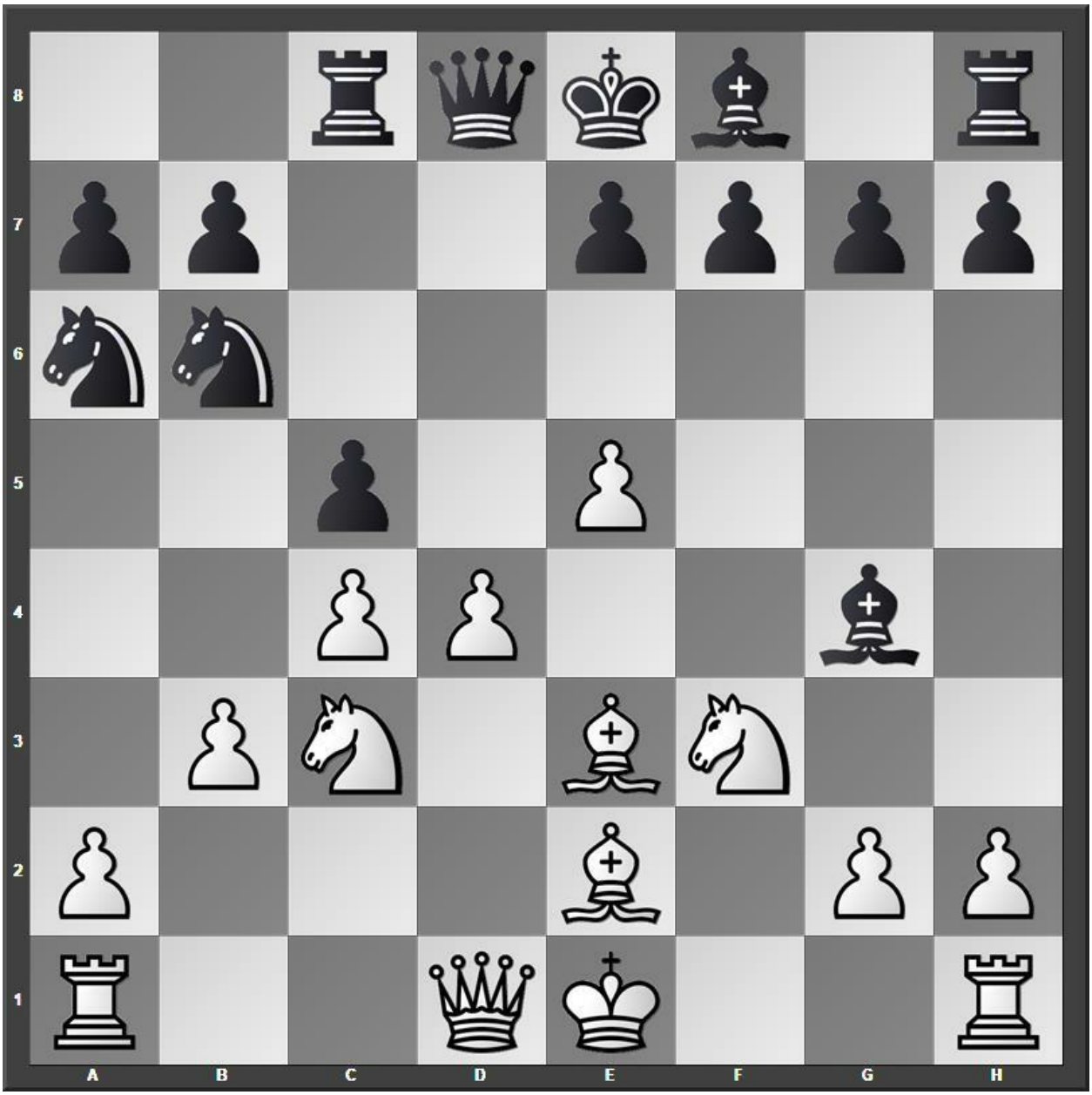
Reasonable options are 8.Nd2 or 8.Qb3.

**8.b3 Na6**

**9.Nf3 Rc8**

**10.Nc3 Bg4**

**11.Be2 c5**



Here a fun option could be 12.0–0 Bxf3 13.Bxf3 cxd4 14.e6 dxe3 15.exf7+ Kxf7 16.Bd5+ Ke8 17.Bf7 mate.

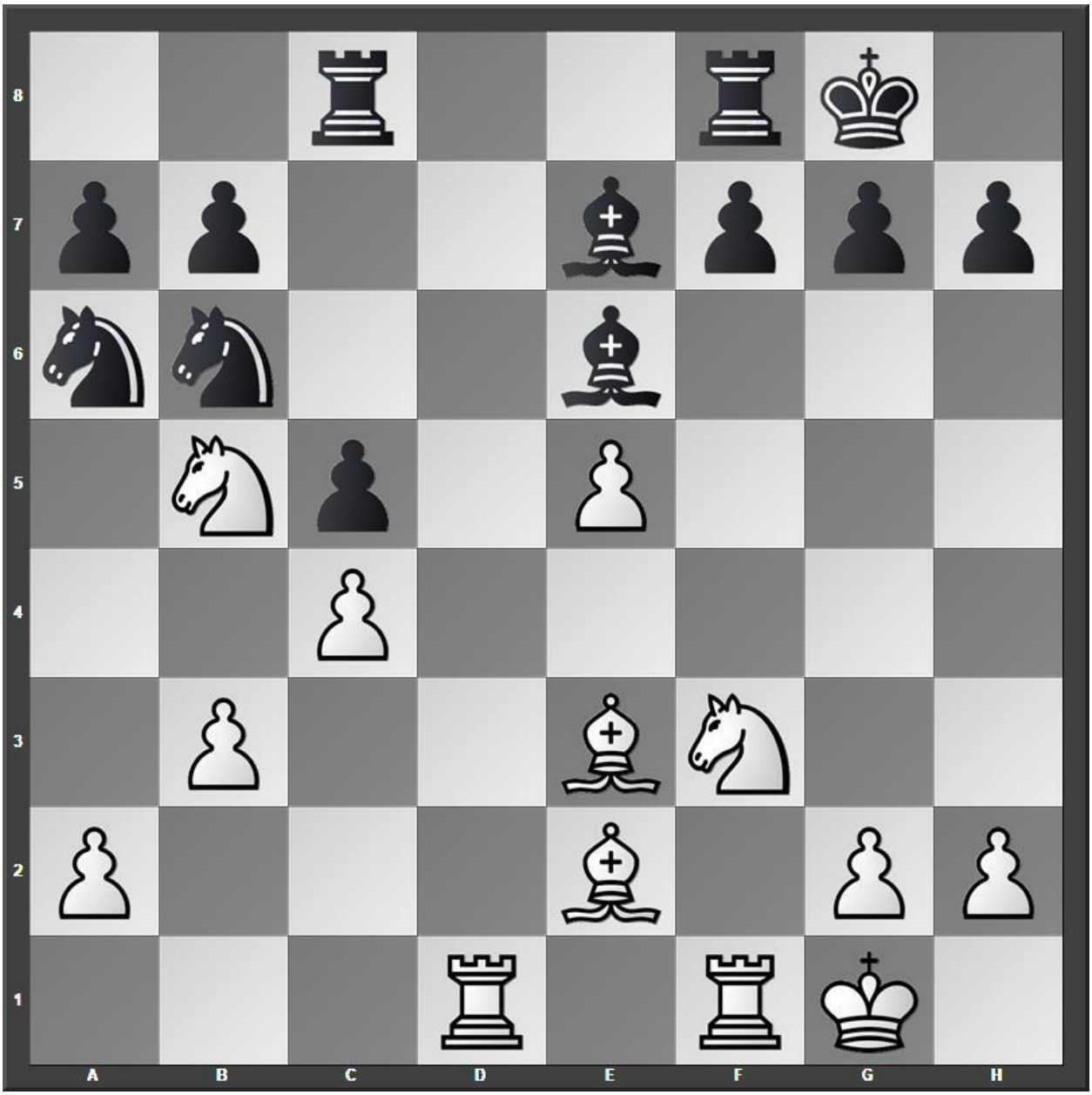
**12.d5 e6**

**13.dxe6 Qxd1+**

**14.Rxd1 Bxe6**

**15.0–0 Be7**

**16.Nb5 0–0**



White will pick off the a7 pawn.

**17.Nxa7 Rc7**

**18.Nb5 Rcc8**

**19.Ng5 Bxg5**

**20.Bxg5 Nb4**

**21.Rd2 Ra8**

**22.a3 Nc6**

**23.a4 Nd7**

**24.Nd6 Ncxe5**

**25.Nxb7 Rab8**

**26.Na5 Ra8**

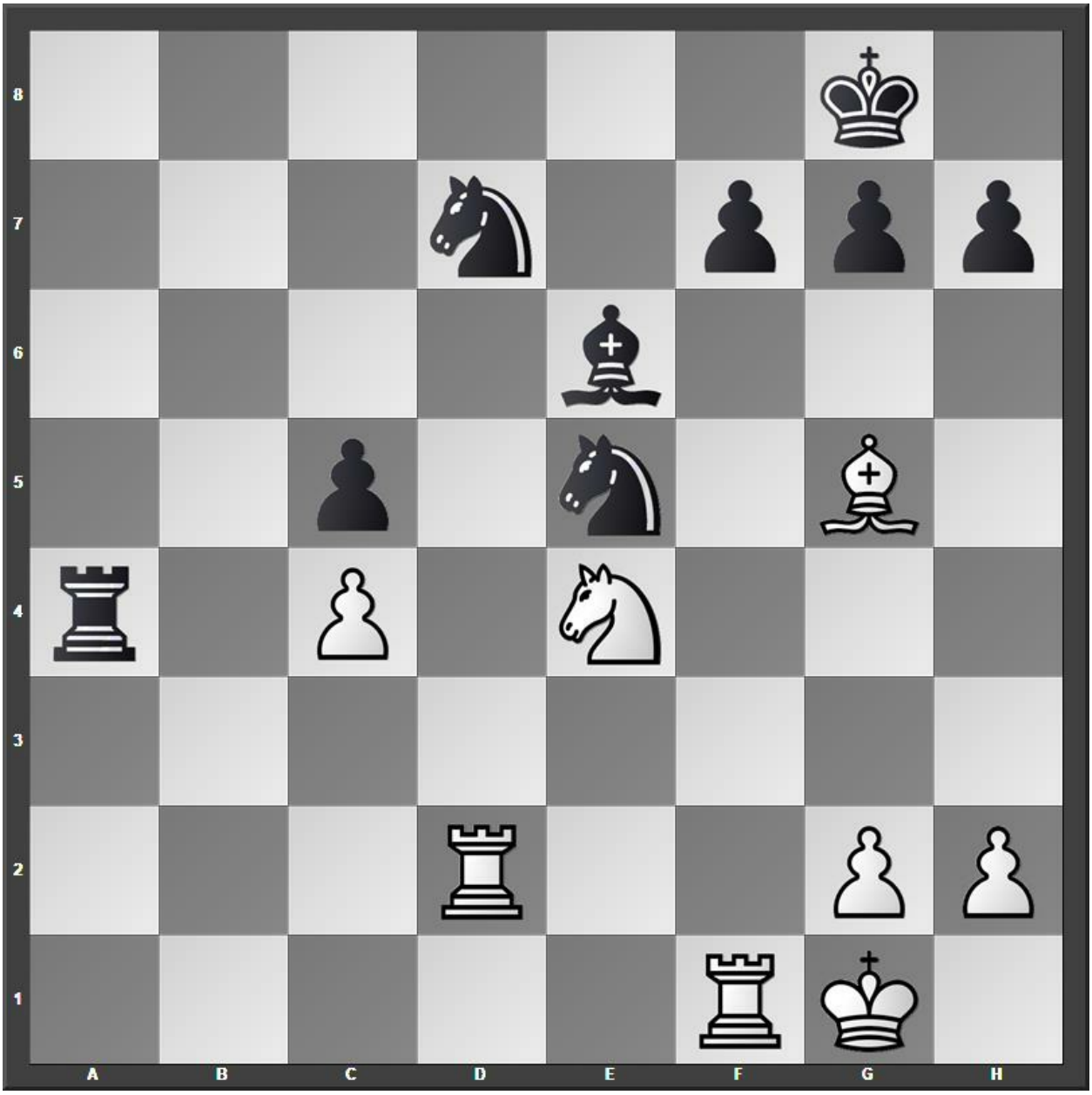
**27.Nb7 Rfb8**

**28.Nd6 Rxb3**

**29.Ne4 Rxa4**

**30.Bd1 Rbb4**

**31.Bxa4 Rxa4**



I missed the line is 32.Nxc5 Rxc4 33.Nxe6 fxe6 34.Bf4.

**32.Nd6 Nb6**

**33.Bf4 Ned7**

**34.h3 Nxc4**

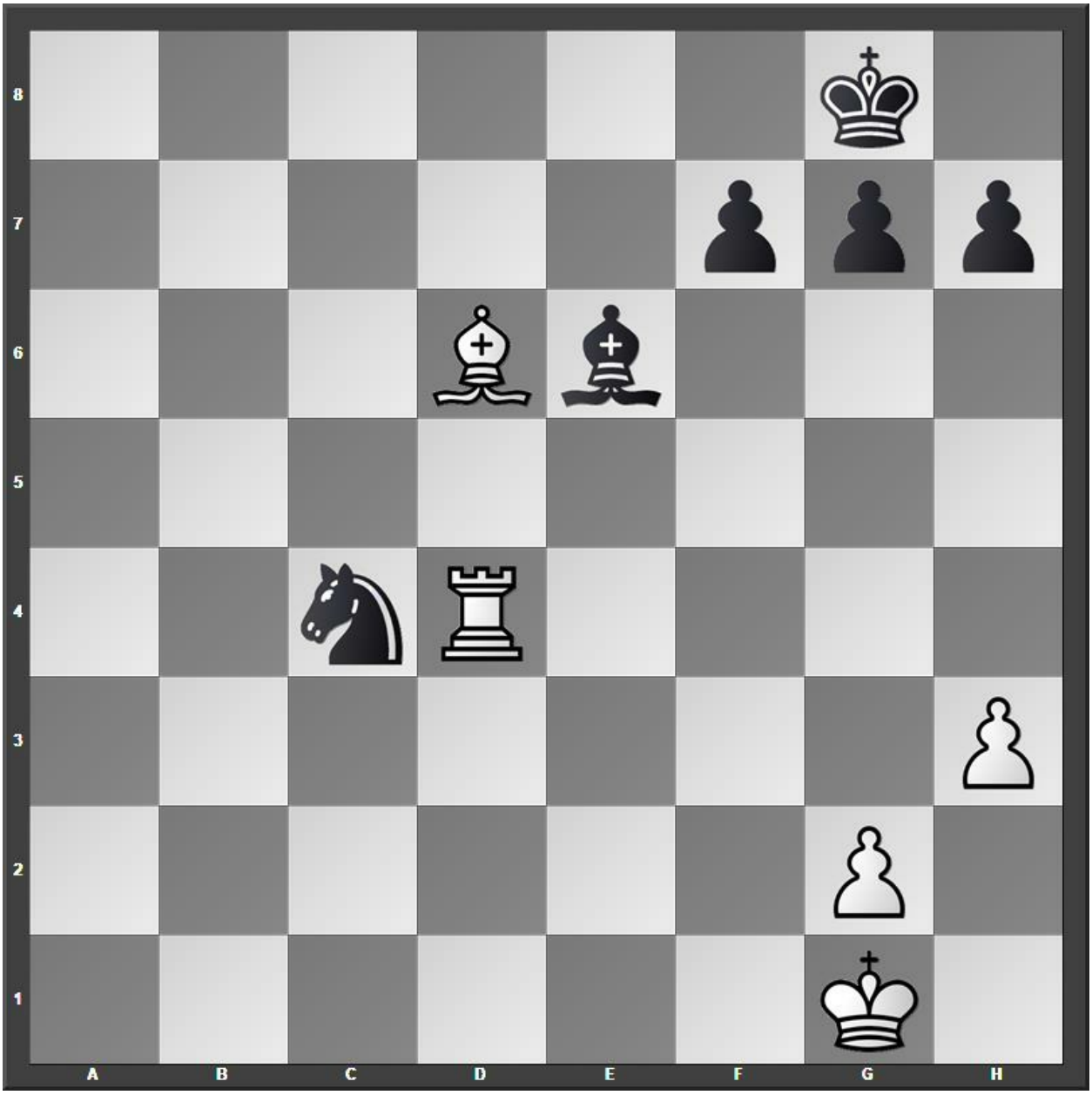
**35.Nxc4 Rxc4**

**36.Bd6 Rd4**

**37.Rxd4 cxd4**

**38.Rd1 Nb6**

**39.Rxd4 Nc4**



White is up the Exchange for pawn, a hard position to win.

**40.Ba3 h6**

**41.Bc1 Kh7**

**42.Rd8 h5**

**43.Bf4 Kg6**

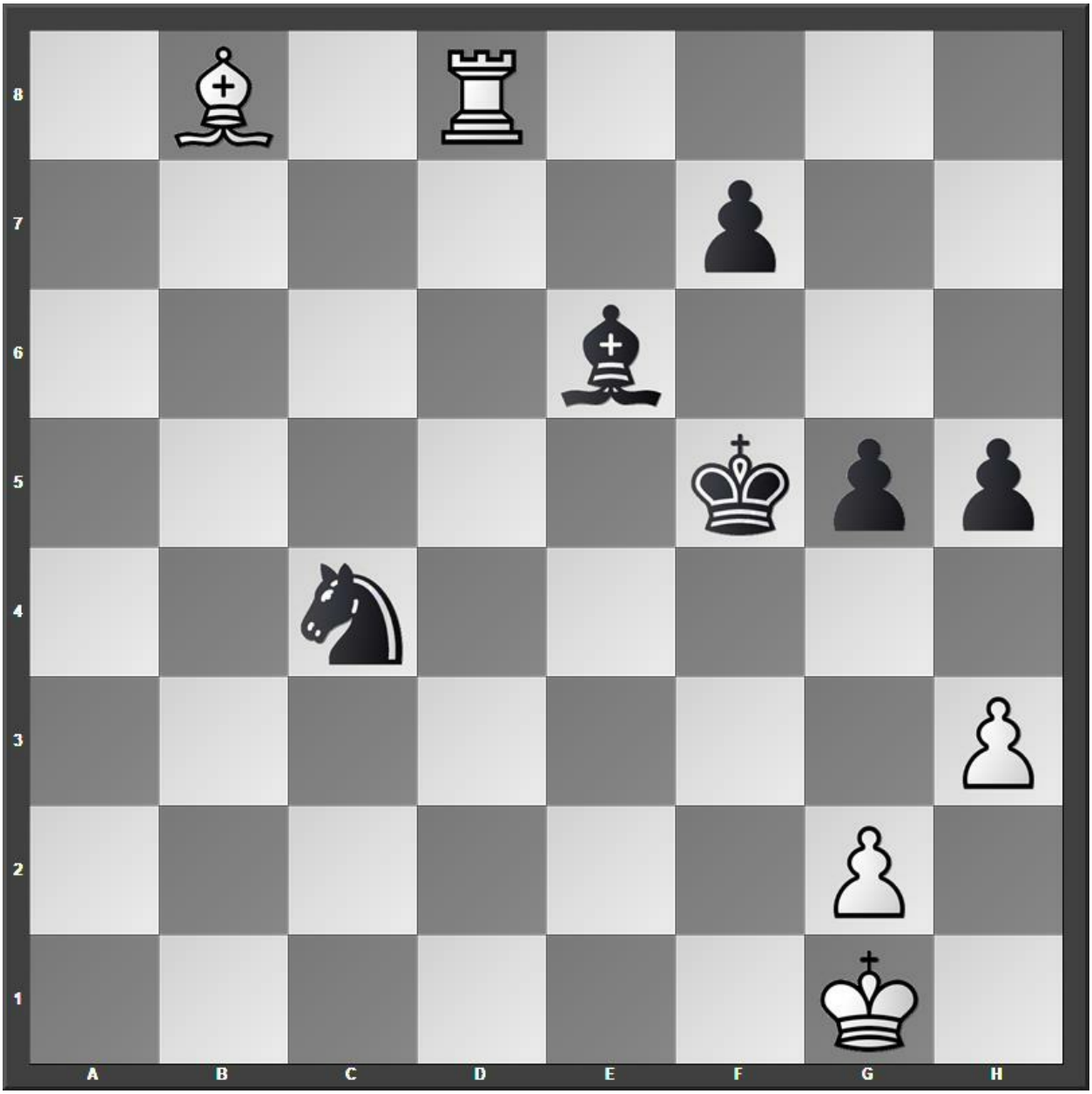
**44.Bb8 Kf5**

**45.Rh8 g6**

**46.Rd8 Ne5**

**47.Rd1 Nc4**

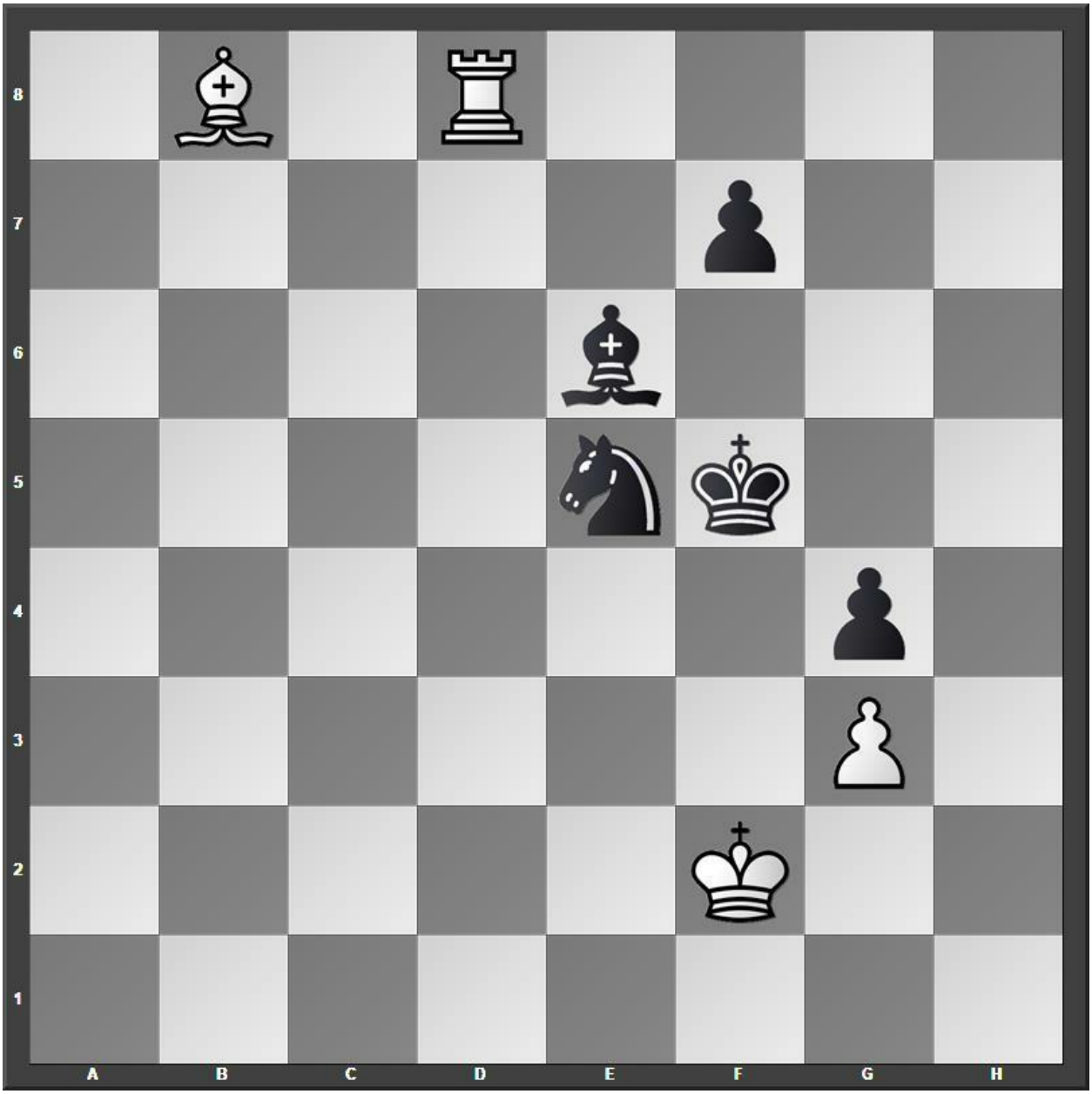
**48.Rd8 g5**



**49.Kf2 g4**

**50.hxg4+ hxg4**

**51.g3 Ne5**



It’s time for to trade a set of minor pieces.

**52.Bxe5 Kxe5**

**53.Rb8 Kf5**

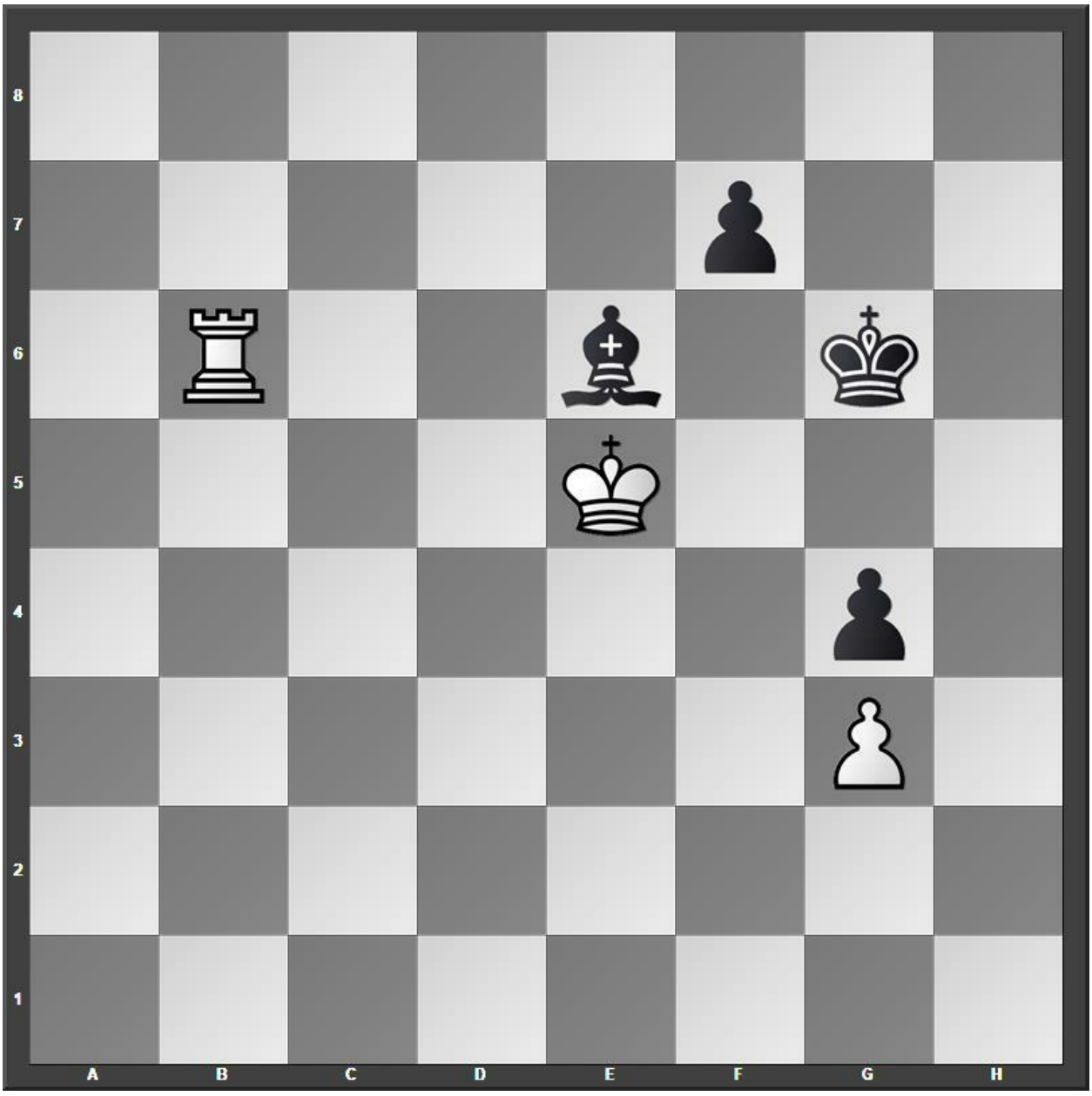
**54.Ke3 Ke5**

**55.Rb5+ Kf6**

**56.Kf4 Kg6**

**57.Rb6 Kg7**

**58.Ke5 Kg6**



I decided to try my luck in an even pawn ending where I have a better king position and I should win both pawns.

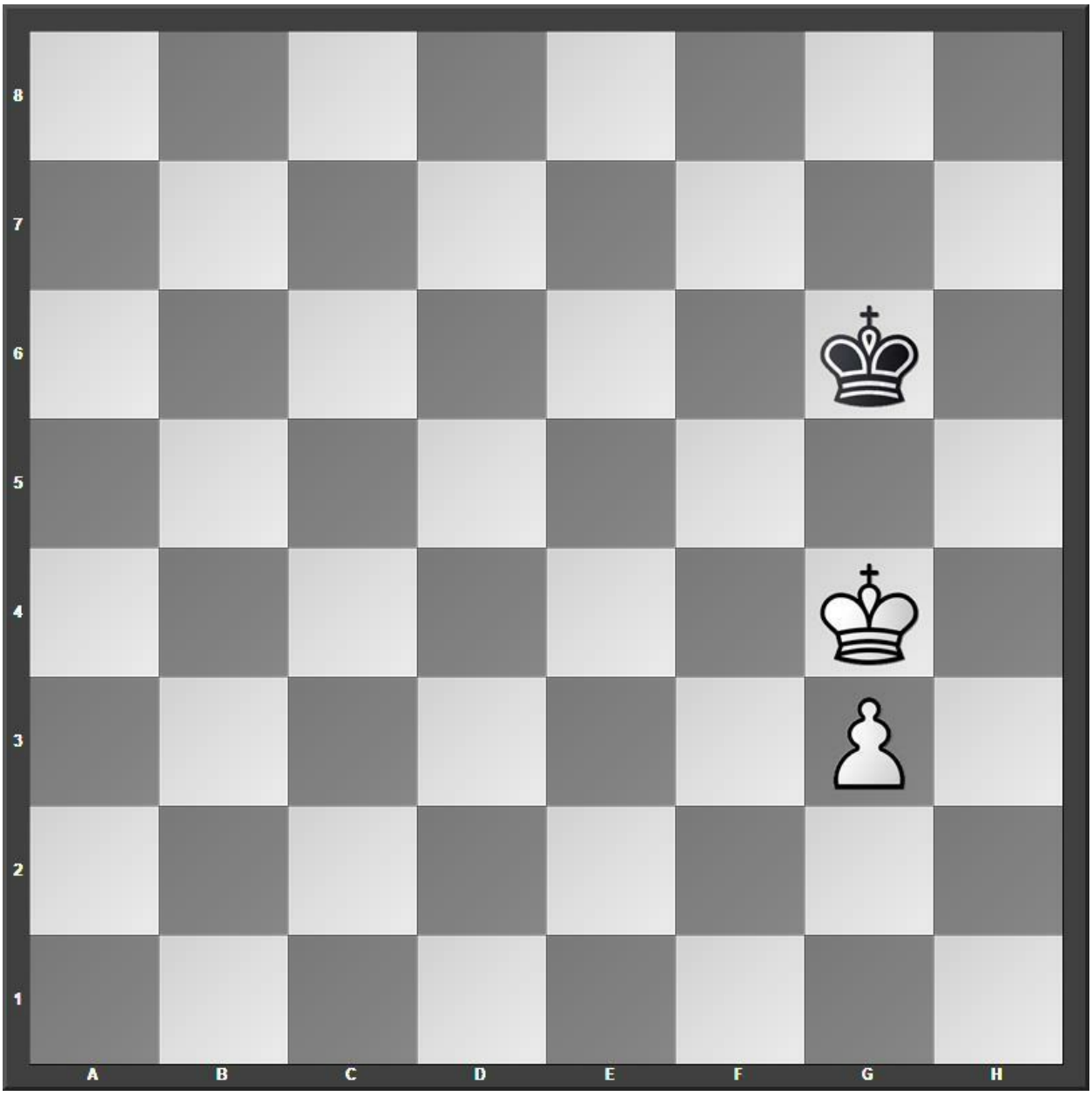
**59.Rxe6+ fxe6**

**60.Kxe6 Kg5**

**61.Ke5 Kg6**

**62.Kf4 Kf6**

**63.Kxg4 Kg6**




The kings directly face each other. It is White’s move, so Black has the opposition. My opponent draws by walking a sober straight line. Black’s king must stay directly in front of my pawn when possible and in front of my king when not.

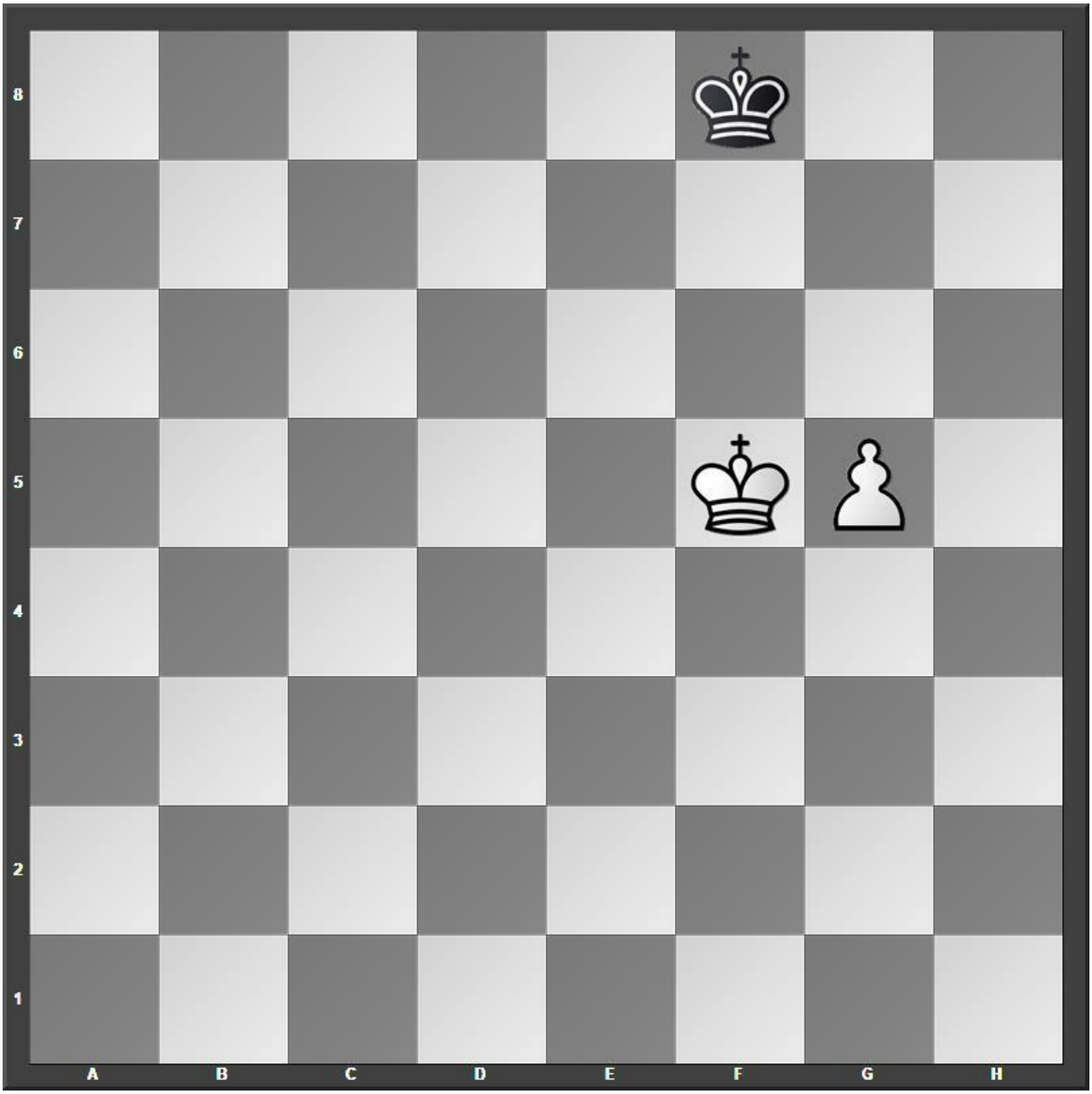
**64.Kf4 Kf6**

**65.g4 Kg6**

**66.g5 Kf7**

I imagine that time and fatigue is setting in for both players.

**67.Kf5 Kf8**




This is the losing move. My opponent's king drunkenly staggers off the g-file to give me the victory.

I figured Black would draw with 67...Kg7 68.g6 Kg8 69.Kf6 Kf8 70.g7+ Kg8 71.Kg6 Stalemate. Instead, now I will have the opposition as White. It’s a simple after my 68.Kf6.

**68.Kf6 Kg8**

**69.Kg6 Kh8**

**70.Kf7 Kh7**

**71.g6+ 1–0**

Black resigns

## Game 14 – B03 [6.fxe5 f6 7.Nf3 fxe5]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 19.09.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

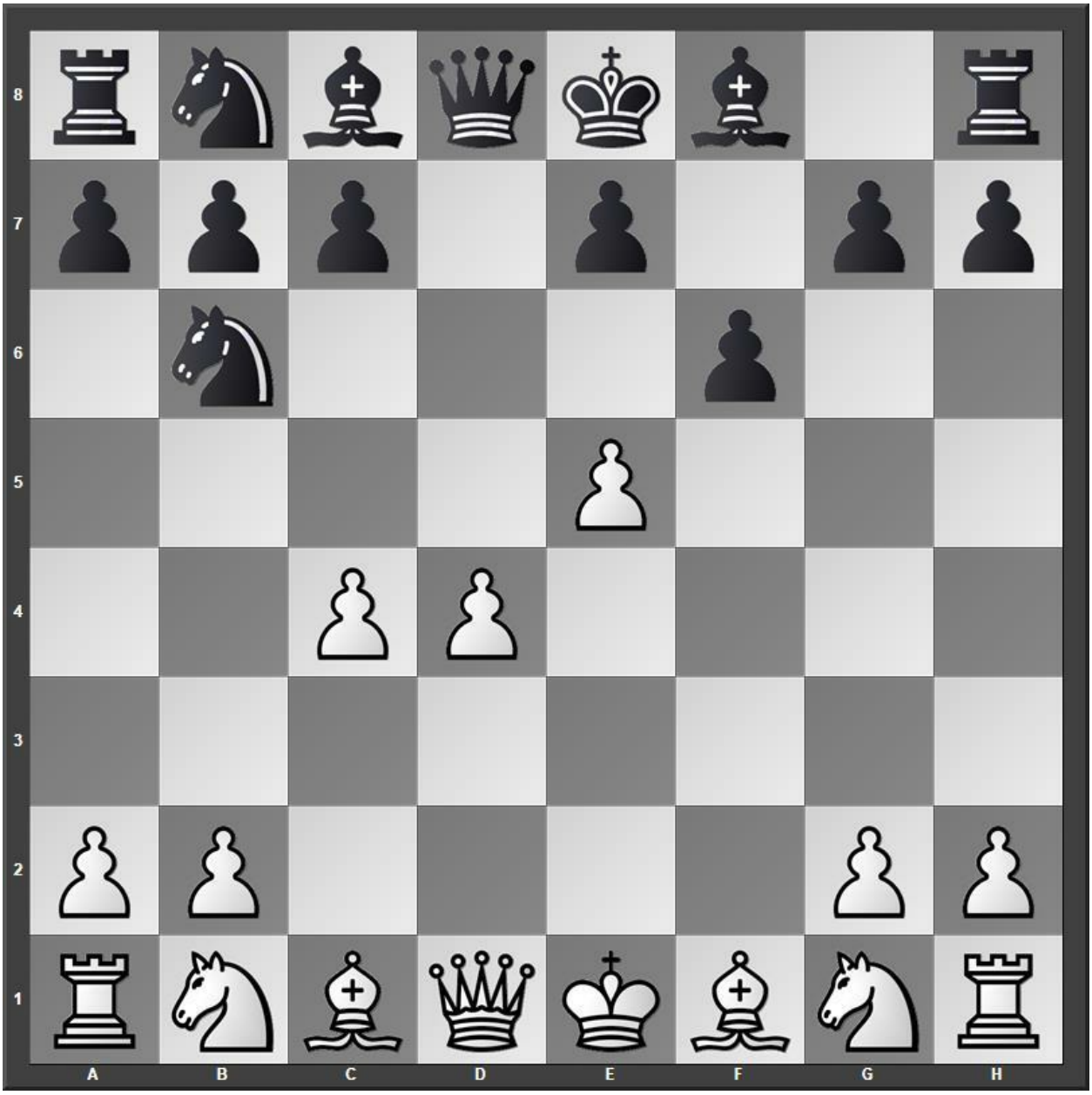
**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.c4 Nb6**

**5.f4 dxe5**

**6.fxe5 f6**



Black attacks e5. The most popular move is 6...Nc6.

**7.Nf3 fxe5**

**8.Nxe5**

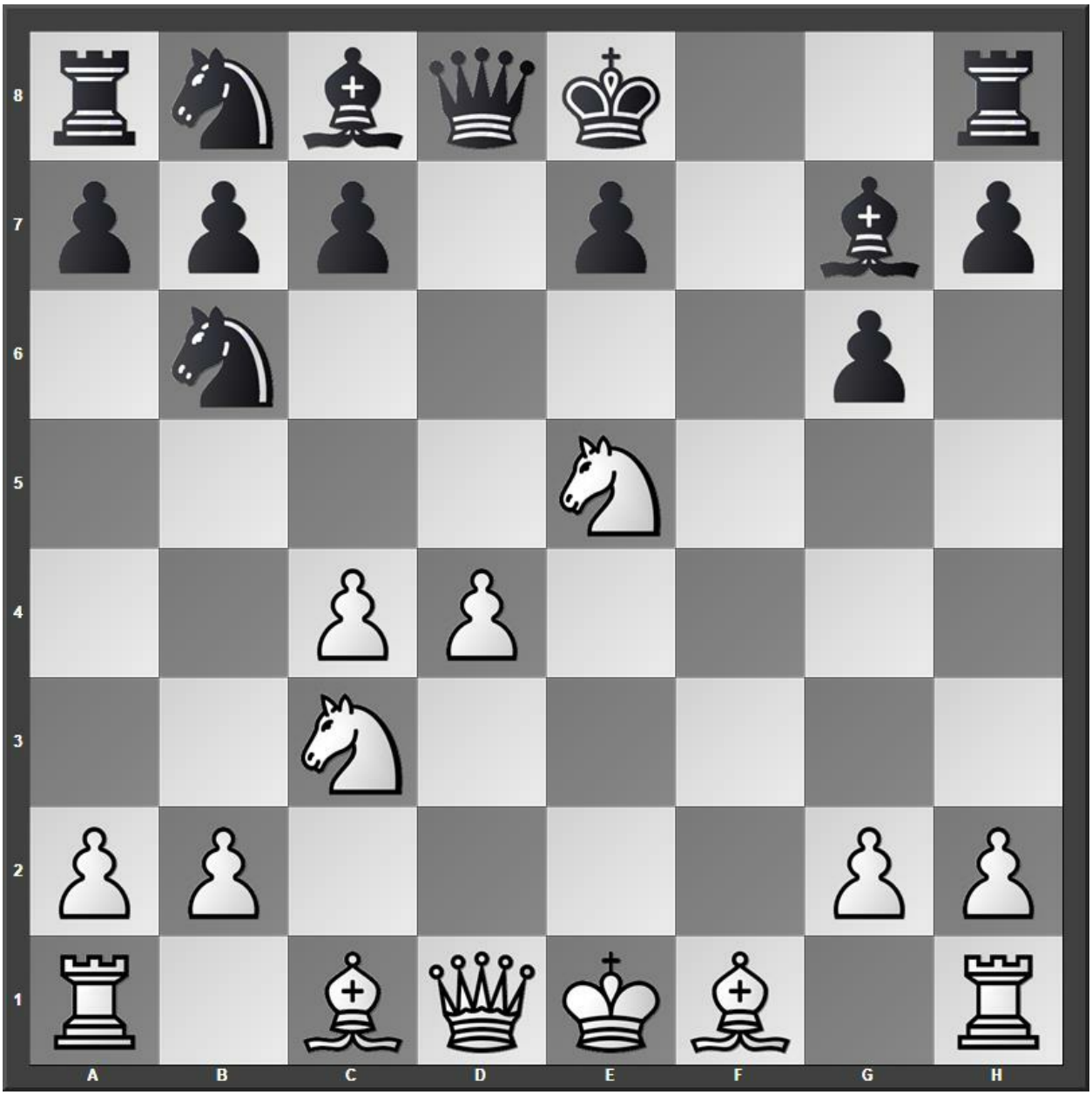
Or 8.c5 N6d7 9.Bb5 when White stands better.

**8...g6**

**9.Nc3**

A promising alternative is 9.c5 Nd5 10.Qf3 Be6 11.Qb3.

**9...Bg7**



If 10.Nf3 c5 11.dxc5 Bxc3+ 12.bxc3 Qxd1+ 13.Kxd1 Na4.

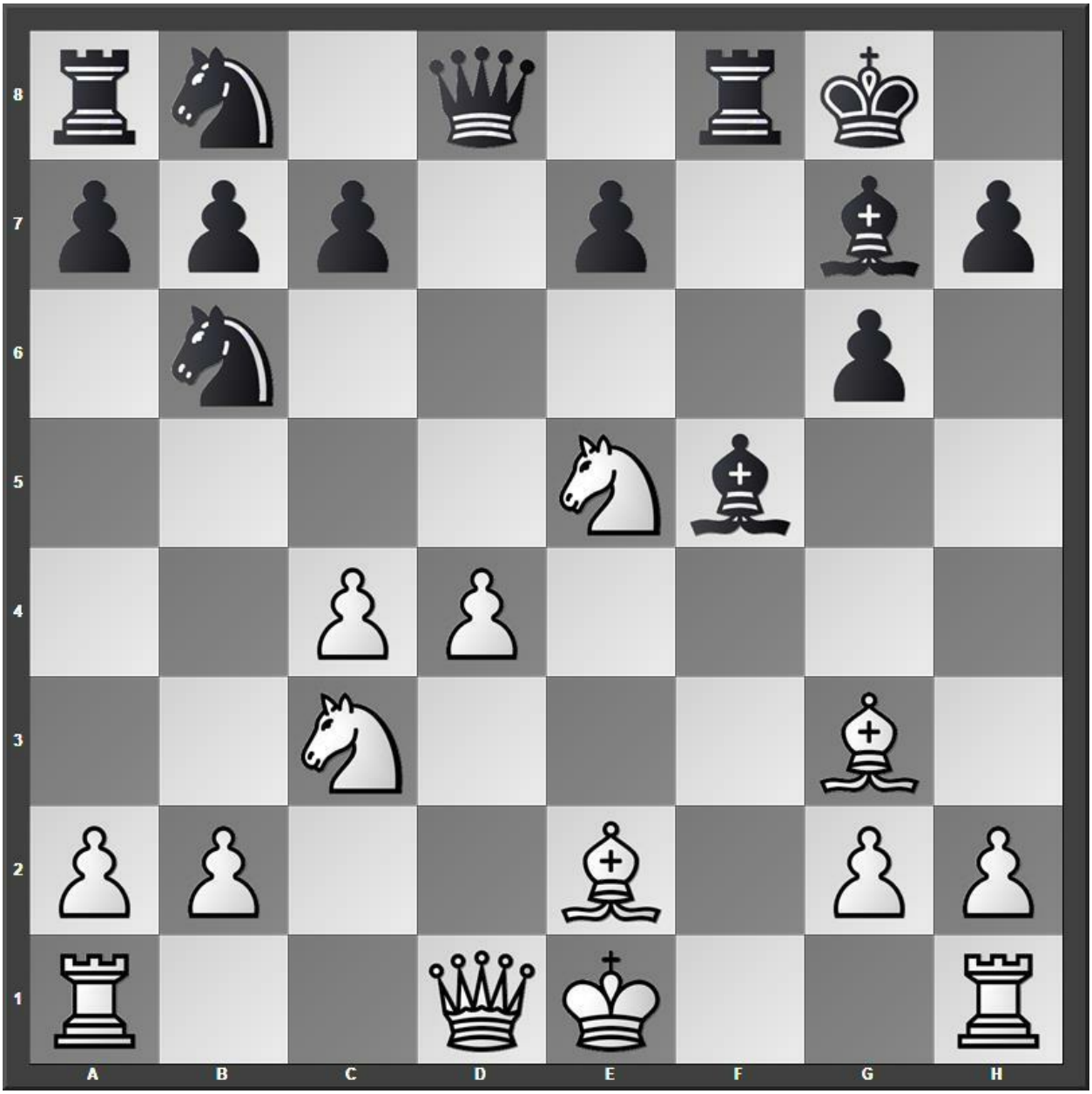
**10.Bf4 0–0**

Black castles and attacks a White bishop. Time to retreat.

**11.Bg3 Bf5**

**12.Be2**

Or 12.c5 N6d7 13.Bc4+ Kh8 14.Nf7+ Rxf7 15.Bxf7 Nc6 with chances for both sides.



**12...Nc8**

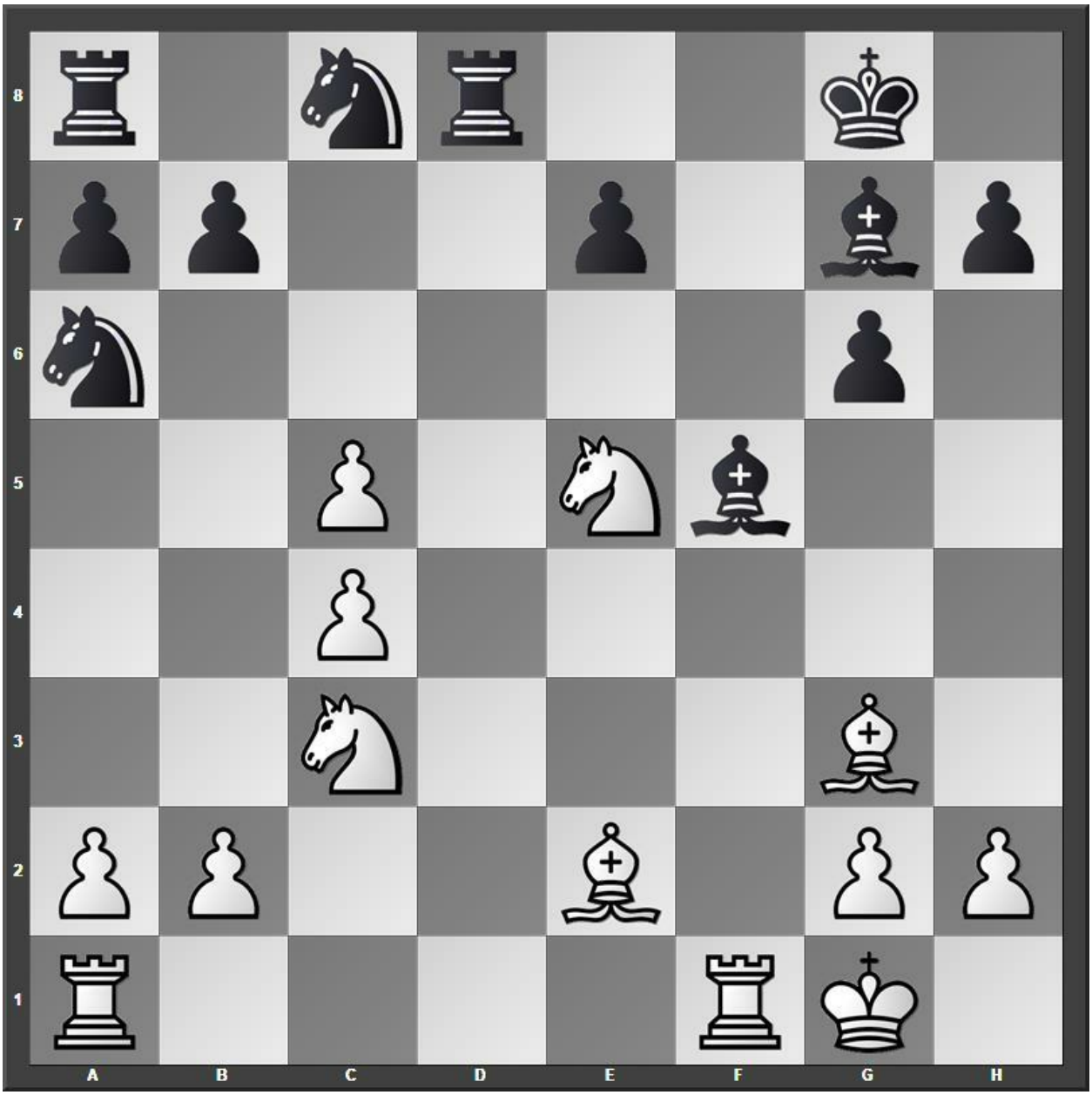
Black voluntarily retreats on knight before developing the other one. If 12...Nc6 13.Nxc6 bxc6 14.Be5 with equality.

**13.0–0 c5**

If 13...Nc6 14.Nxc6 bxc6 15.Be5 White stands better.

**14.dxc5 Na6**

**15.Qxd8 Rxd8**



**16.Nd5**

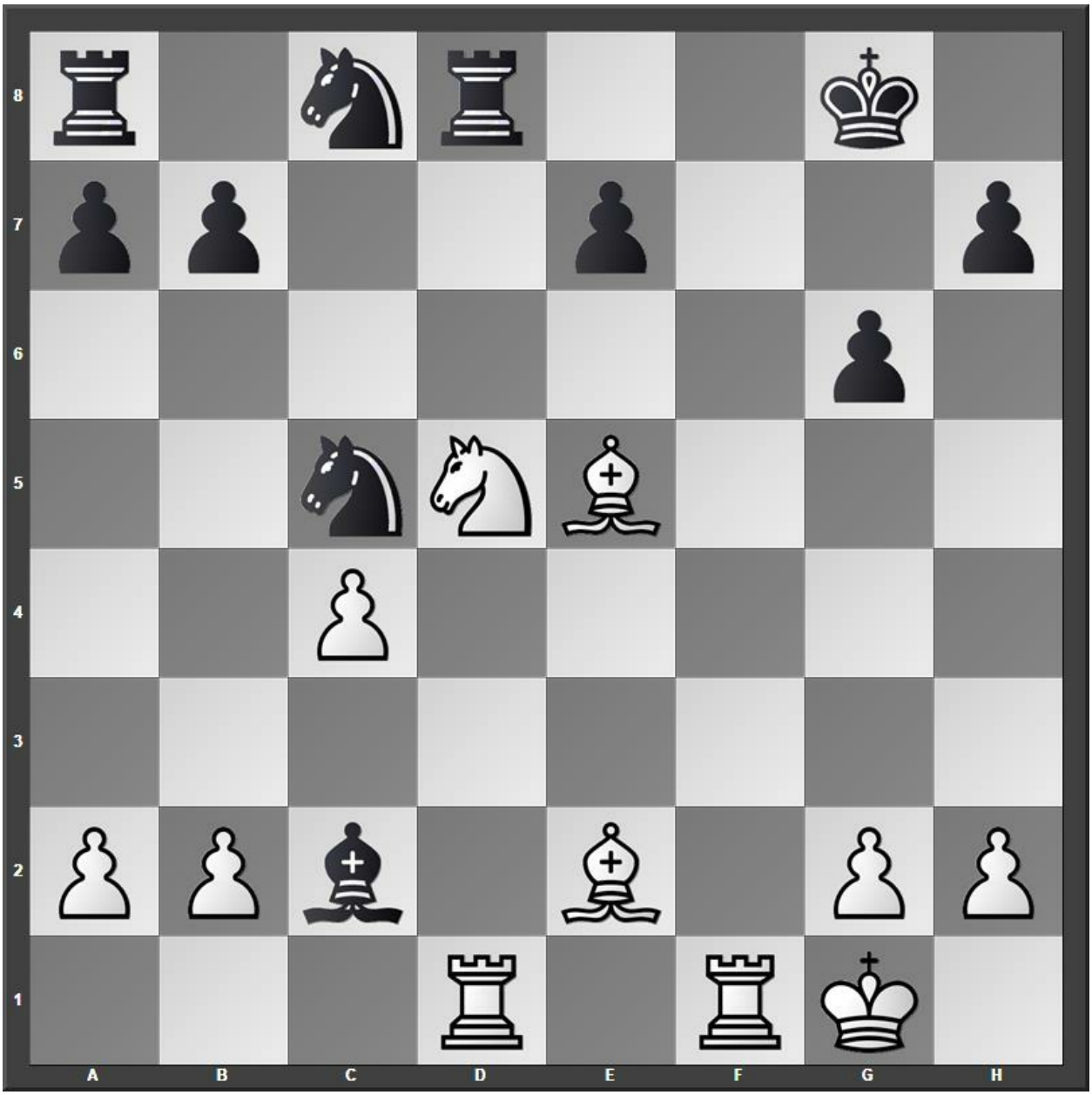
Stronger is 16.Na4 which holds onto the c5 pawn.

**16...Nxc5**

**17.Rad1 Bxe5**

**18.Bxe5 Bc2**

Or 18...Rd7 19.b4 Na6 20.c5 and White wins.



**19.Rd2**

I can immediately play 19.Nf6+ exf6 20.Rxd8+ winning.

**19...Be4**

**20.Nf6+ Kf8**

**21.Rxd8+ 1–0**

Black resigns

## Game 15 – B03 [6.fxe5 e6 7.Nf3 Bb4+]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 16.11.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

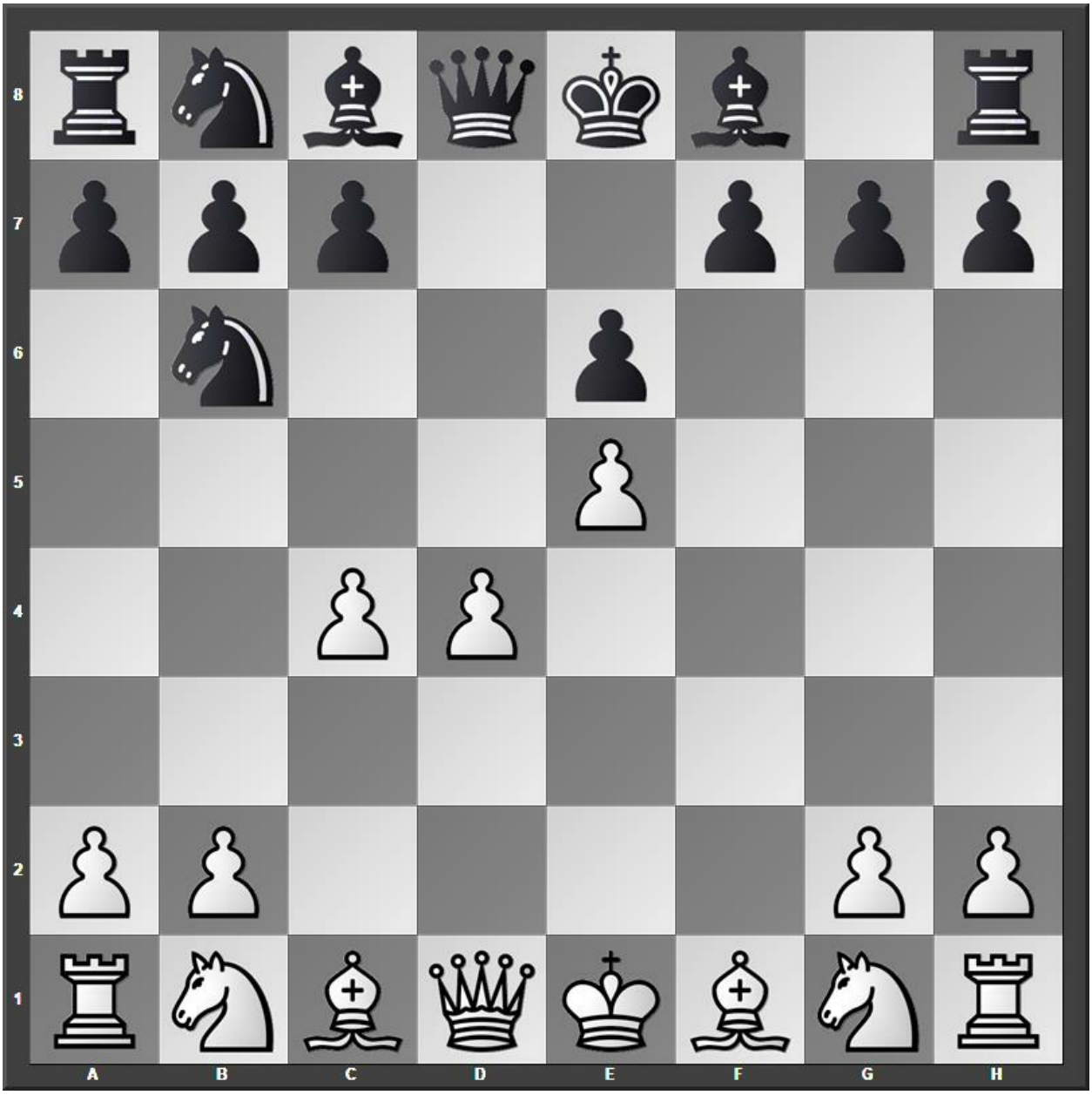
**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.c4 Nb6**

**5.f4 dxe5**

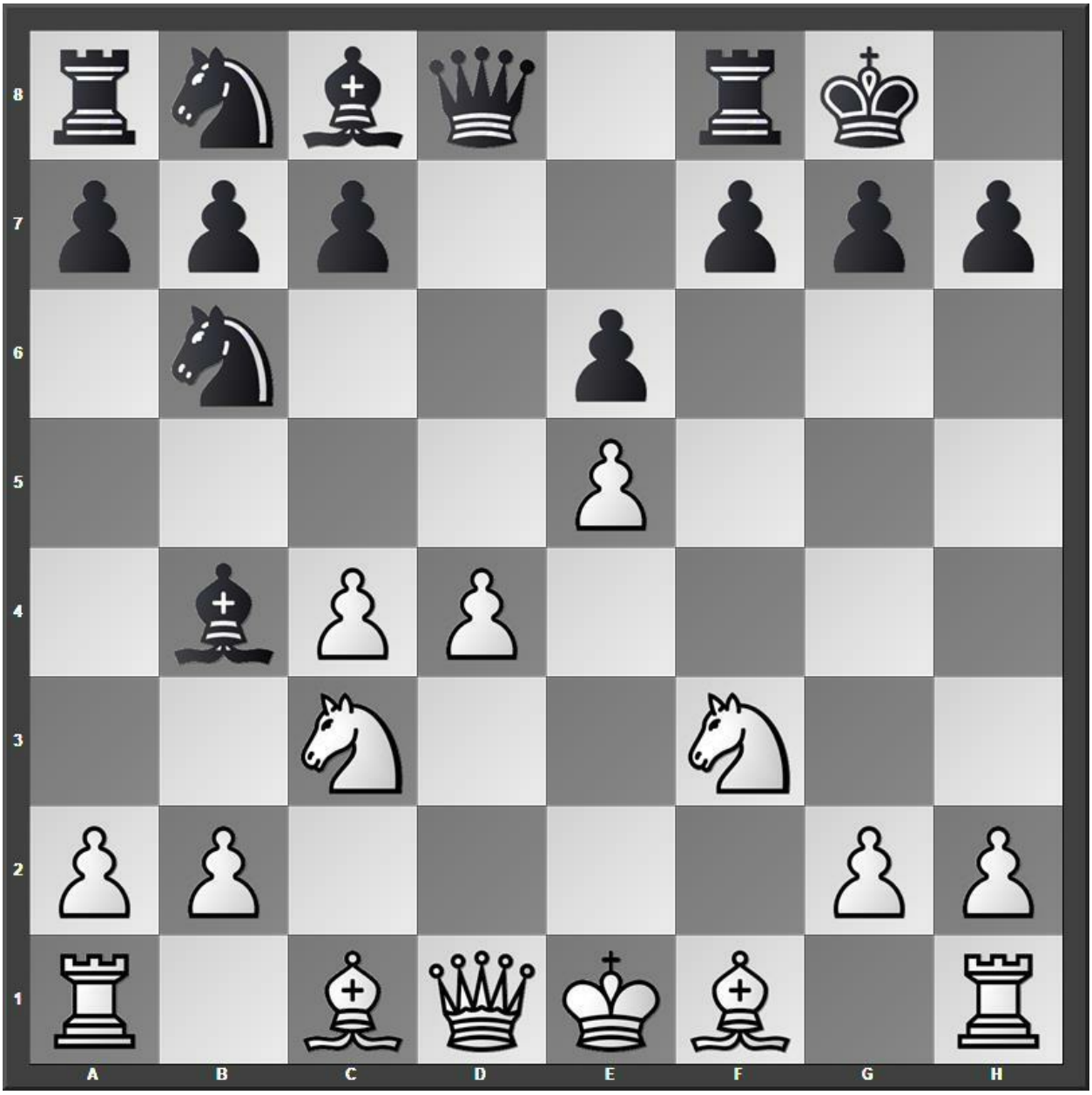
**6.fxe5 e6**



Better is 6…Bf5 first. For the move 6...Nc6, see next game.

**7.Nf3 Bb4+**

**8.Nc3 0–0**



**9.Be3**

Better for White is 9.Bd3.

**9...Nc6**

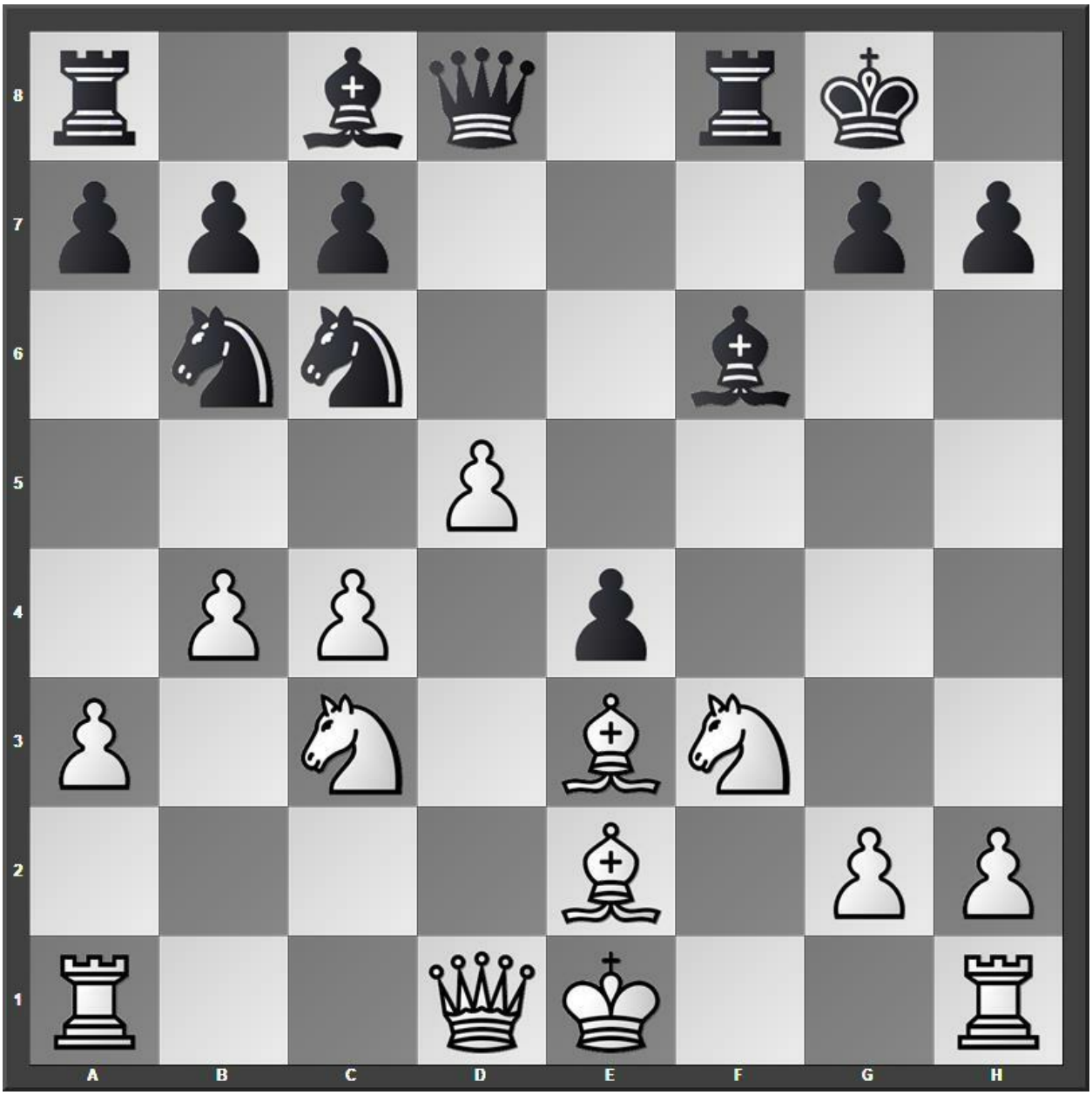
**10.a3 Be7**

**11.b4 f6**

**12.exf6 Bxf6**

**13.Be2 e5**

**14.d5 e4**



**15.Nd4**

An enterprising option is 15.Nxe4 Bxa1 16.Qxa1 when White has substantial compensation for the Exchange.

**15...Nxd4**

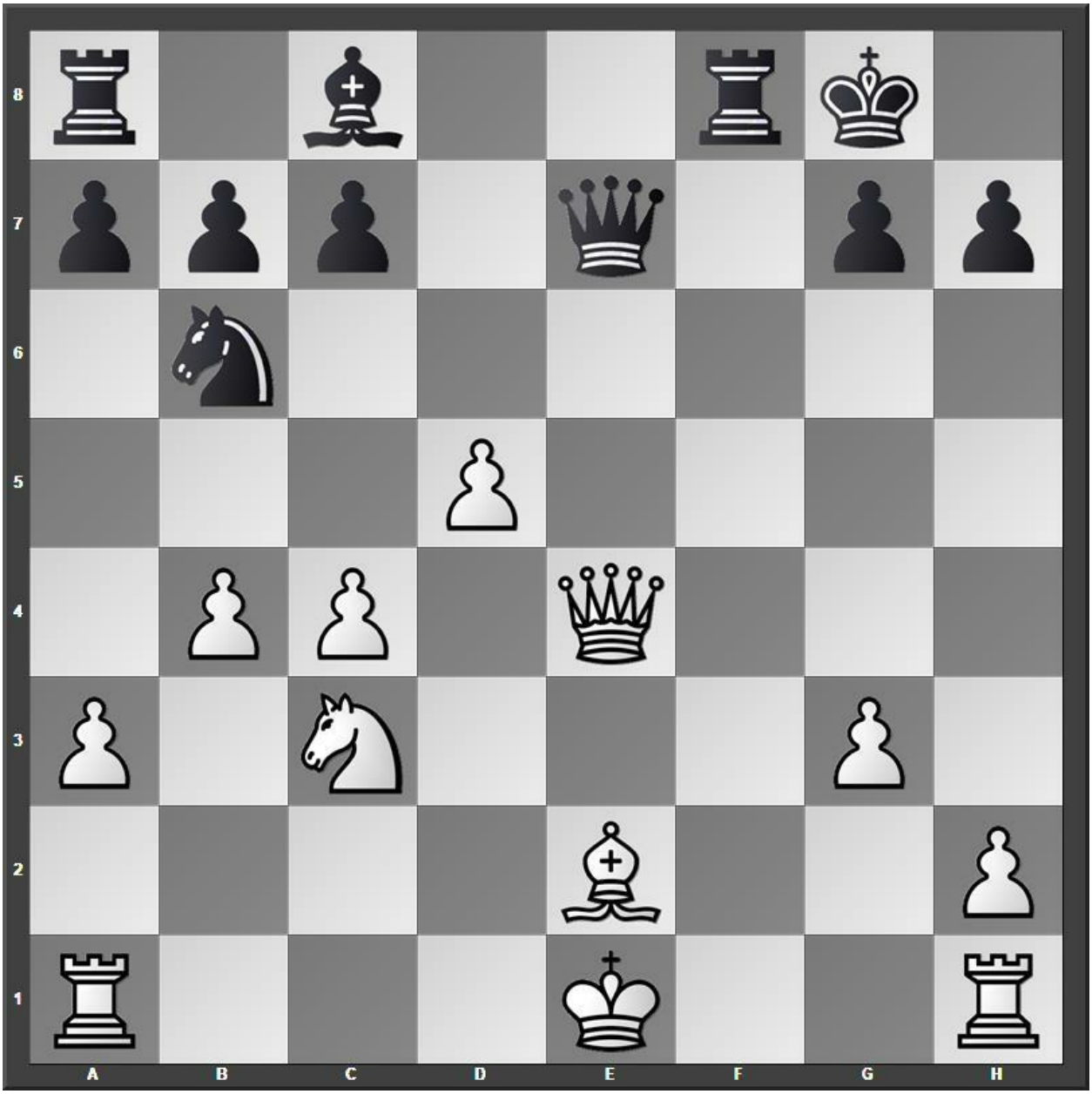
**16.Bxd4 Bxd4**

**17.Qxd4 Qh4+**

**18.g3 Qe7**

**19.Qxe4**

White should kick the knight with 19.c5 Nd7 20.d6.



**19...Qg5**

Better is 19...Qxe4 20.Nxe4 Re8.

**20.Qd4 Bh3**

**21.Ne4**

Or 21.c5 Nd7 22.Qd2 with chances for both sides.

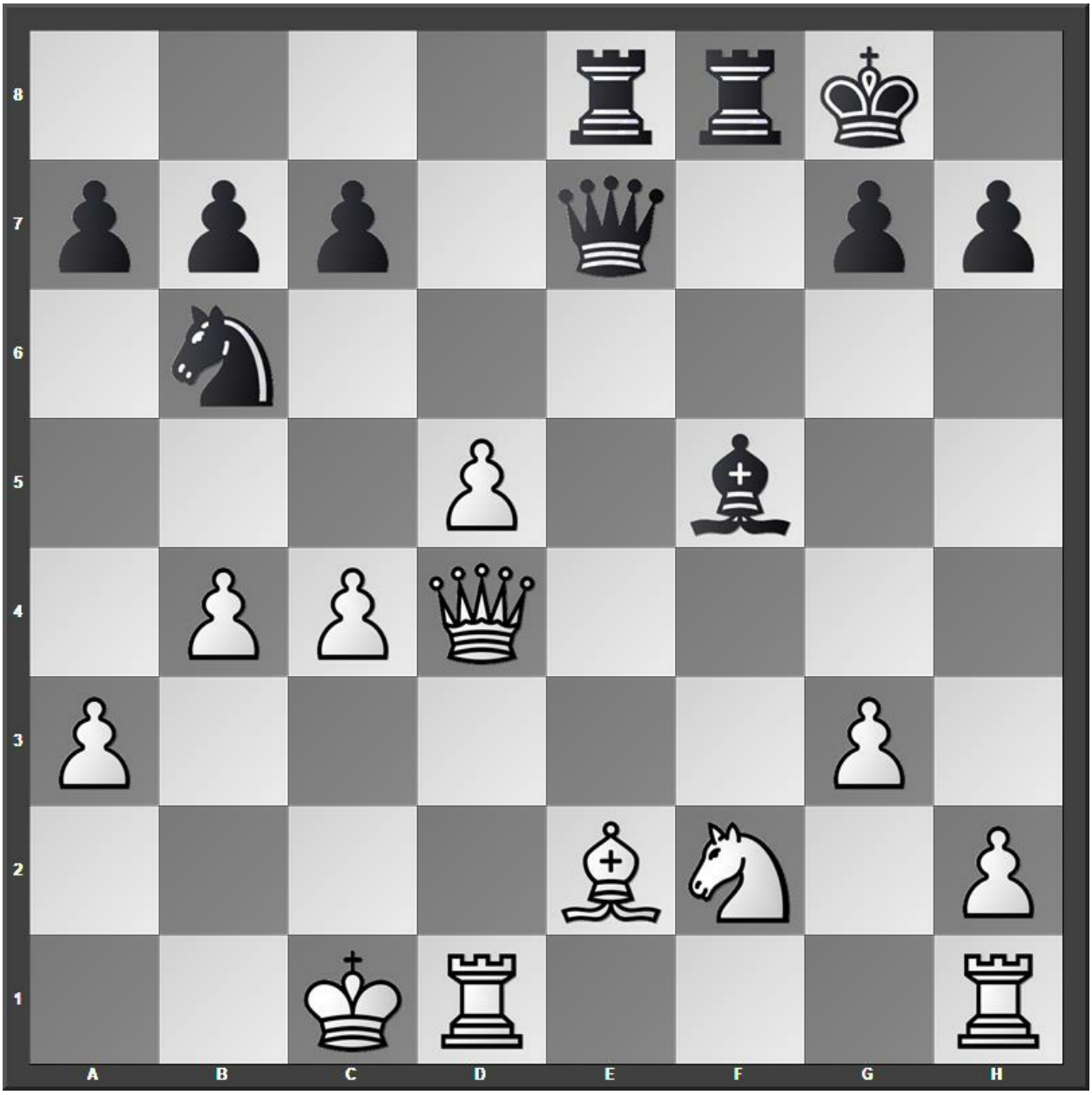
**21...Qe7**

Better is 22.Nc3 with equal chances.

**22.Nf2 Rae8**

**23.0–0–0 Bf5**

White is under pressure. If 23...Qxe2 24.Nxh3 Nxc4 25.Nf4 Rxf4 26.gxf4 Re4 and Black is winning.

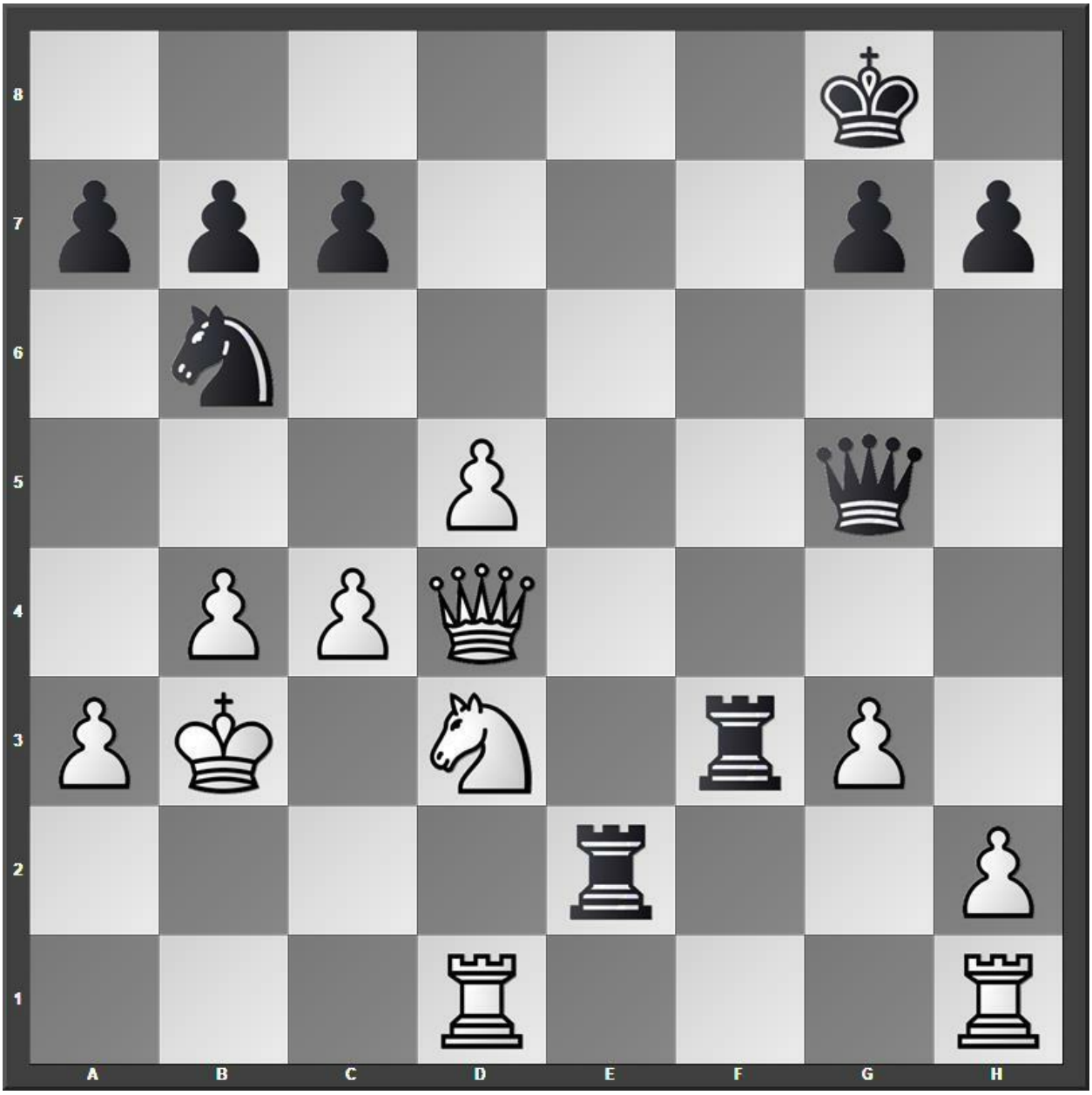


**24.Bd3 Qg5+**

**25.Kb2 Bxd3**

**26.Nxd3 Re2+**

**27.Kb3 Rf3**



If 28.c5 Qxd5+ 29.Qxd5+ Nxd5 favors Black.

**28.Rhe1 Rxe1**

Stronger is 28...Qe7 29.Qc3 Rxd3 30.Qxd3 Rxe1 31.Rxe1 Qxe1 when Black has a knight for a pawn.

**29.Rxe1 Qd2**

**30.Re8+ Kf7**

**31.Re7+ Kxe7**

**32.Qe4+ Kd8**

**33.Qxf3 Nd7**

**34.Nc5 Nxc5+**

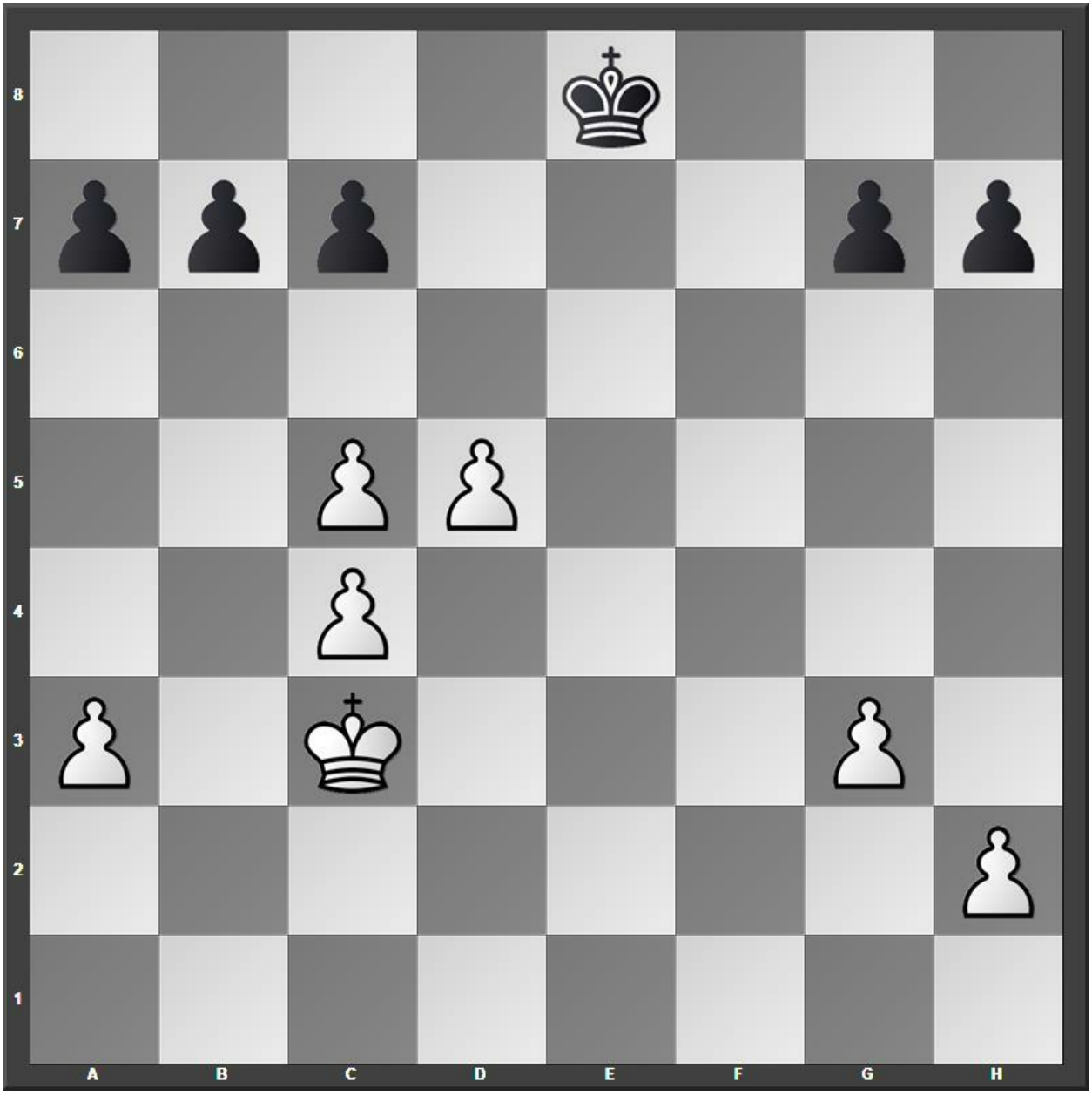
**35.bxc5 Qe1**

Or 35...Qh6 36.Qf4 and White stands better.

**36.Qf8+ Qe8**

**37.Qxe8+ Kxe8**

**38.Kc3 1–0**



White should win this pawn endgame, but it takes some care. My opponent gives up, but I would have played on.

Black resigns

## Game 16 – B03 [6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Nf3 Bg4]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 16.11.2021

**1.e4 Nf6**

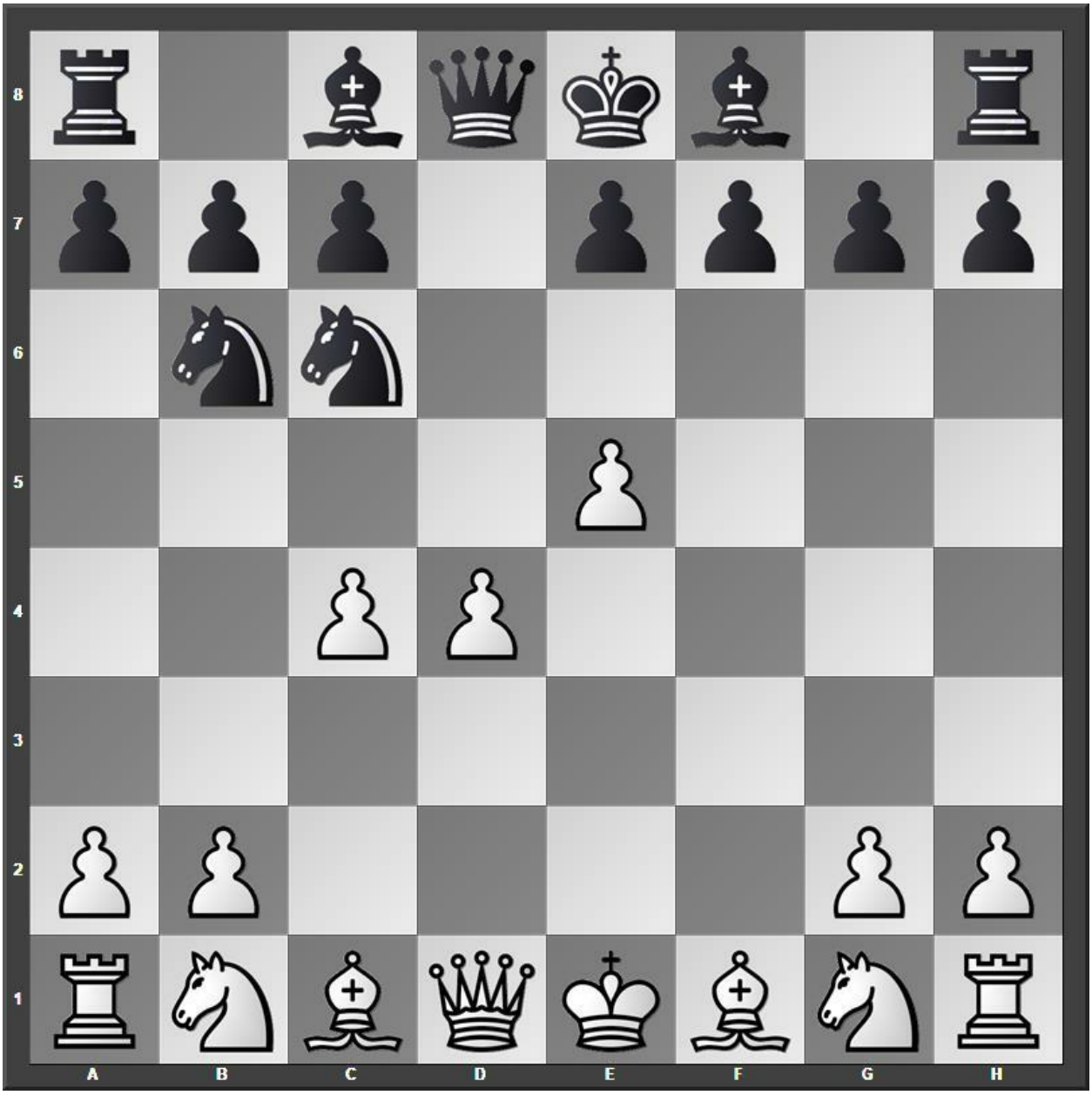
**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.c4 Nb6**

**4.d4 d6**

**5.f4 dxe5**

**6.fxe5 Nc6**

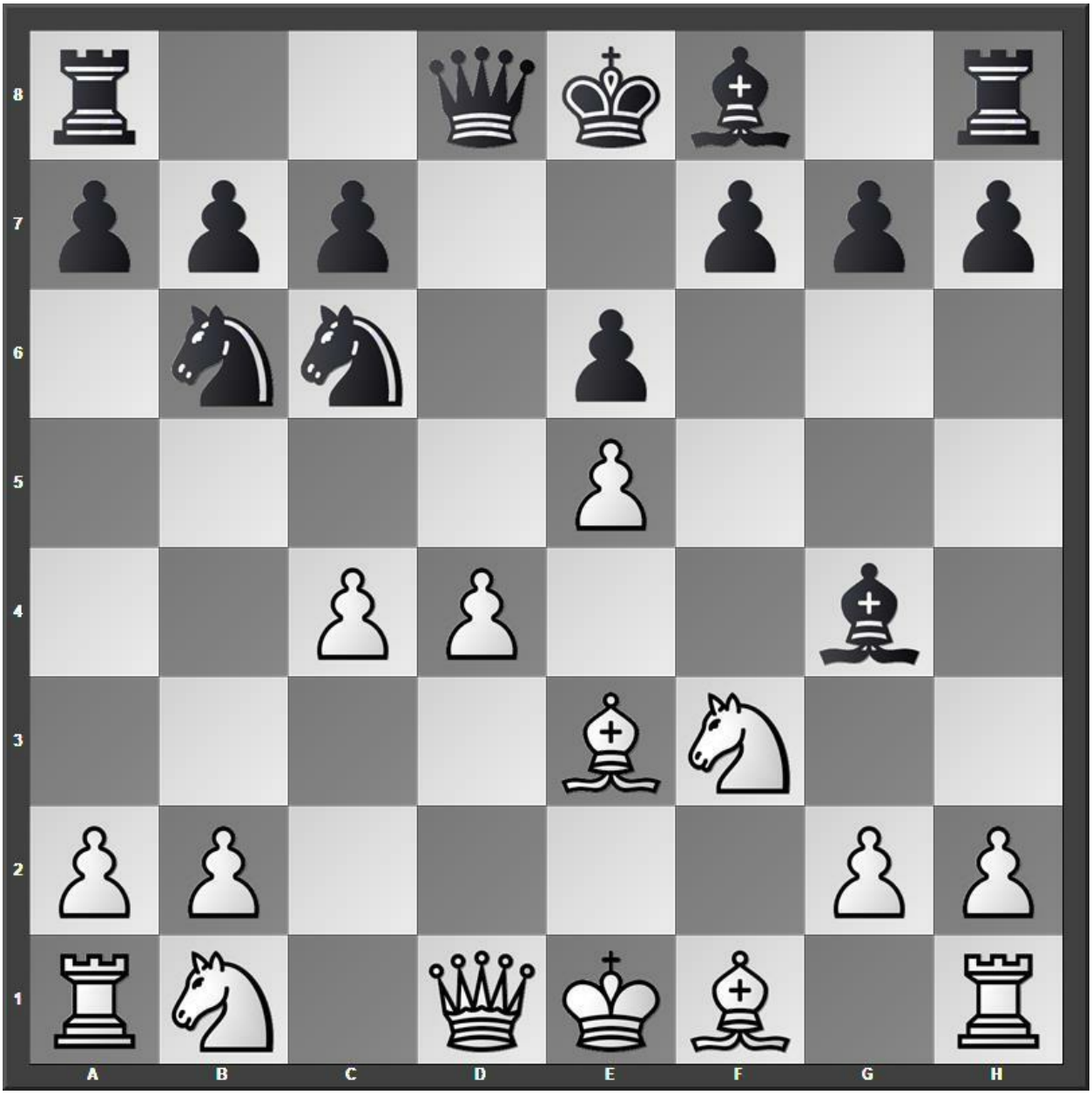


**7.Nf3**

Four Pawns Attack main line is 7.Be3 Bf5 8.Nc3 e6 9.Nf3 Be7 which is a variation I play from both sides of the board.

**7...Bg4**

**8.Be3 e6**



If 9.Nbd2 Bb4 10.a3 Bxf3 11.gxf3 Be7 with equal chances.

**9.Nc3 Qd7**

Or 9...Be7 10.Qd2 Bxf3 11.gxf3 Bh4+ 12.Kd1 with equality.

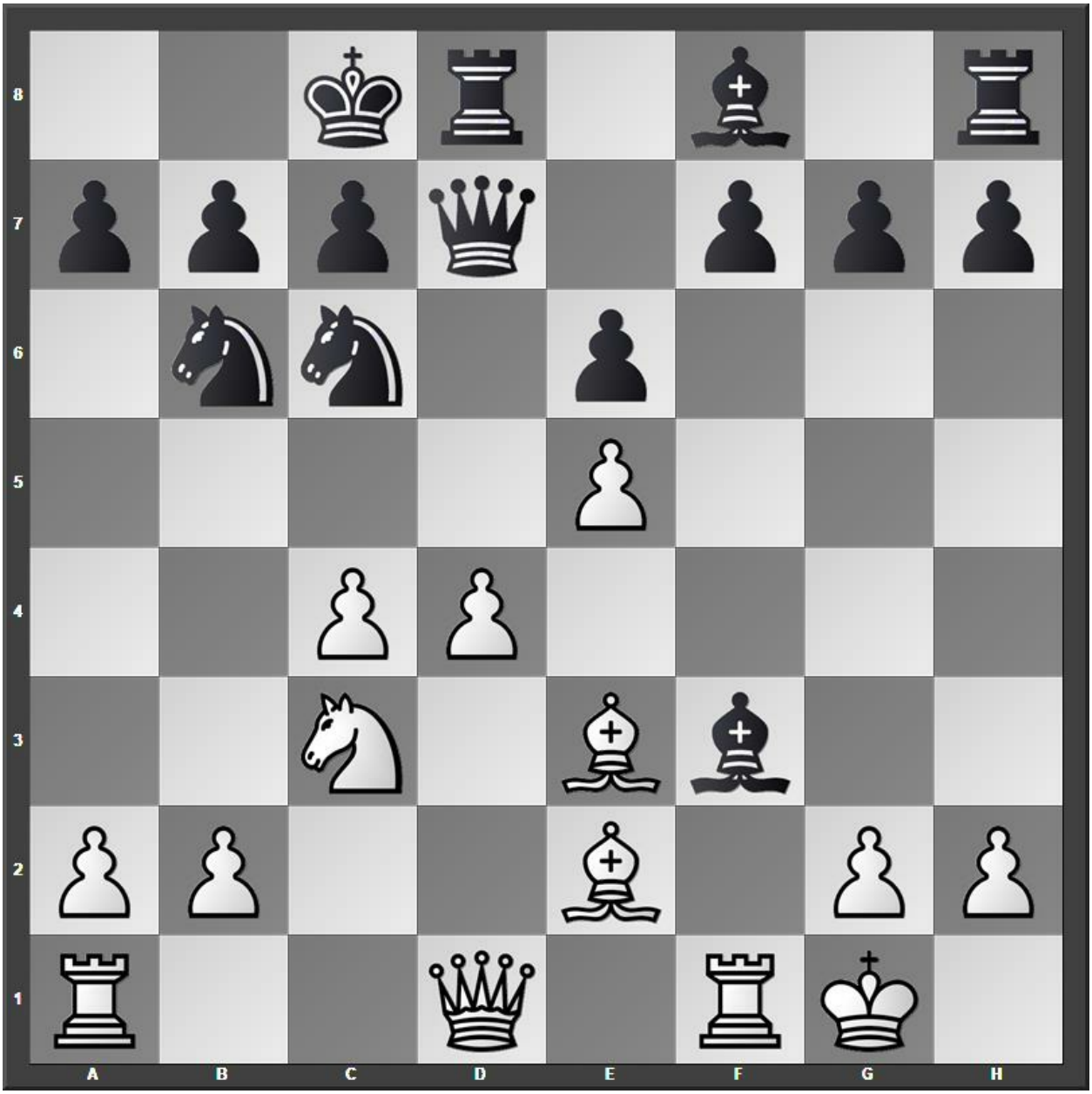
**10.Be2 0–0–0**

If 10...Bxf3 11.gxf3 0–0–0 favors Black.

**11.0–0**

If 11.c5 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Nc4 13.Bxc6 Qxc6 14.Qe2 Nxe3 15.Qxe3 with equality.

**11...Bxf3**

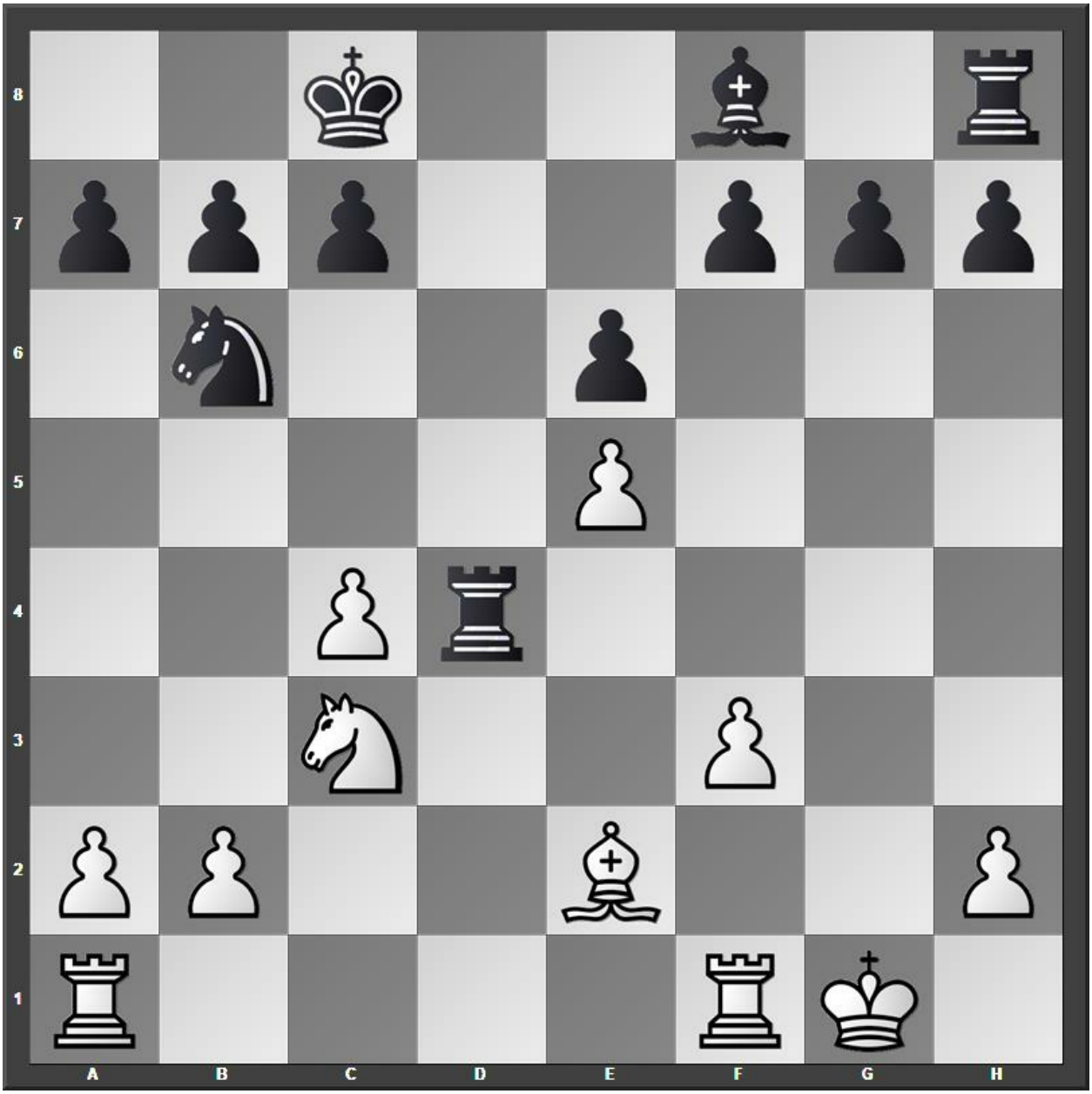


If 12.Rxf3 Nxd4 13.Qxd4 Qxd4 14.Bxd4 Rxd4 15.Rxf7 Nd7 and Black is winning.

**12.gxf3 Nxd4**

**13.Bxd4 Qxd4+**

**14.Qxd4 Rxd4**



Black has won a pawn and will soon win many more.

**15.Nb5 Rd2**

**16.Rfe1 a6**

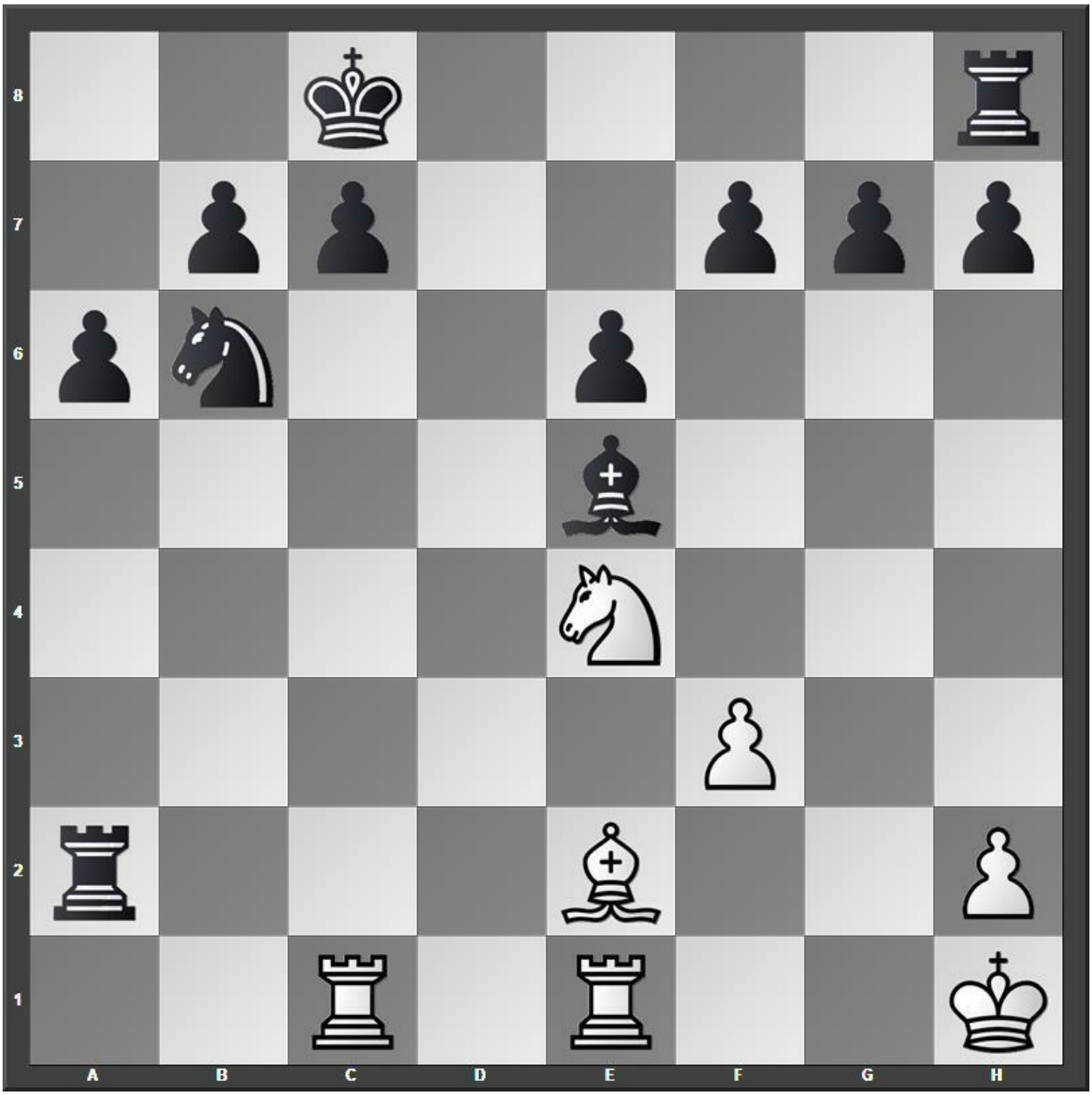
**17.Nc3 Rxb2**

**18.c5 Bxc5+**

**19.Kh1 Bd4**

**20.Rac1 Bxe5**

**21.Ne4 Rxa2**



If 22.Nc5 Bf4 23.Ra1 Rxa1 24.Rxa1 Rd8 I am up 5 pawns.

**22.Ng5 Bf4**

**23.Rc5 Bxg5**

**24.Rxg5 g6**

**25.Rc5 Rd8**

**26.Rd1 Rxd1+**

**27.Bxd1 Ra1 0–1**

White resigns

## Game 17 – B03 [6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3 e6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 22.10.2021

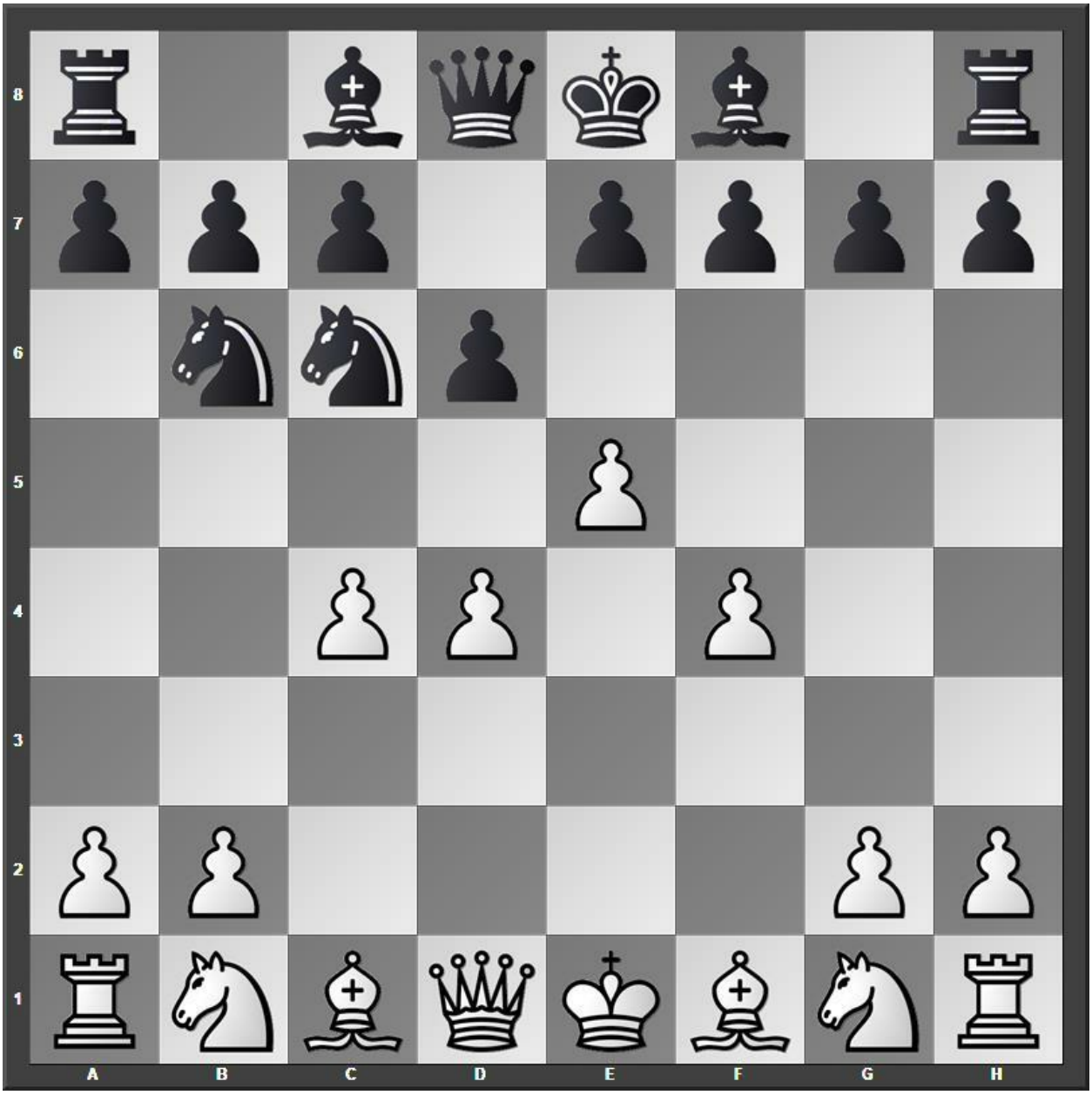
**1.e4 Nf6**

**2.e5 Nd5**

**3.d4 d6**

**4.c4 Nb6**

**5.f4 Nc6**

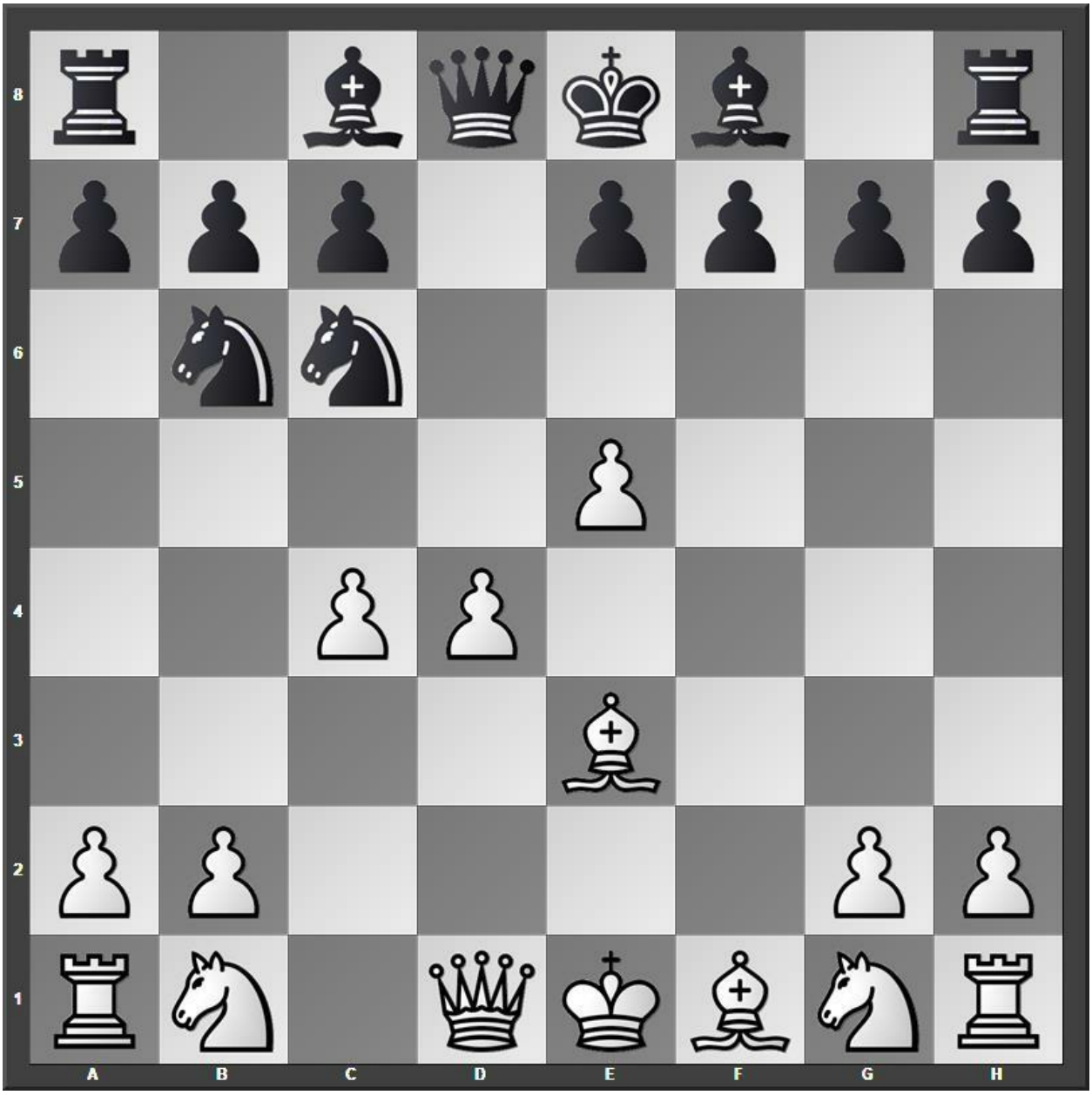


Black delays 5…dxe5. White can try 6.Nc3 dxe5 7.d5 Nb8 8.c5, but I feel comfortable with the chaotic main line.

**6.Be3 dxe5**

**7.fxe5**

The position transposes to 5.f4 dxe5 6.fxe5 Nc6 7.Be3.



**7…e6**

Black's strategy traps a bishop. Better is 7...Bf5 or 7...g6.

**8.Nf3 Be7**

**9.Nc3 0–0**

**10.Be2 f5**

**11.0–0**

Also good 11.exf6 Bxf6 12.0–0 Bd7 13.Ne4.

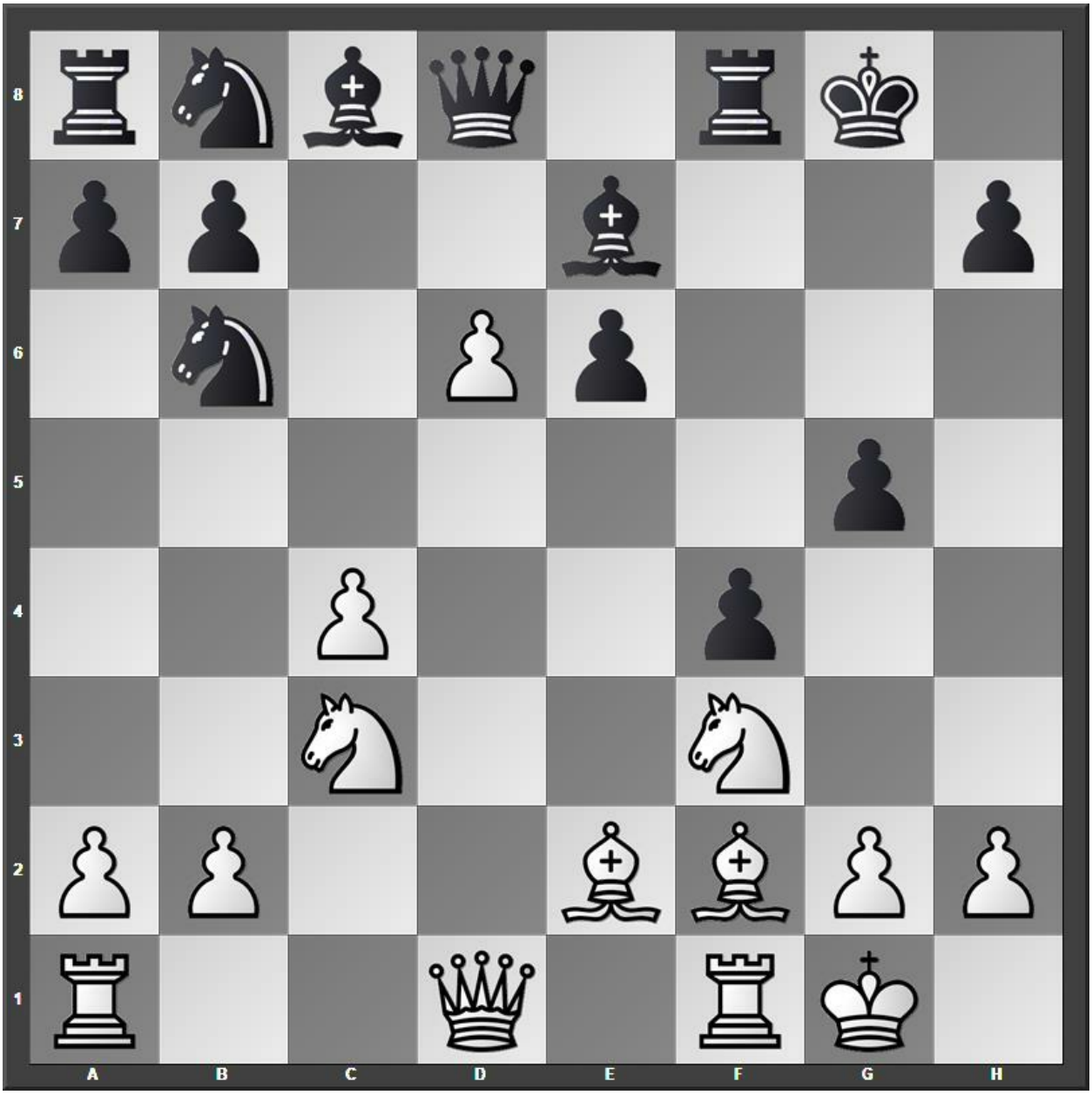
**11...f4**

**12.Bf2 g5**

**13.d5 Nb8**

**14.d6 cxd6**

**15.exd6**



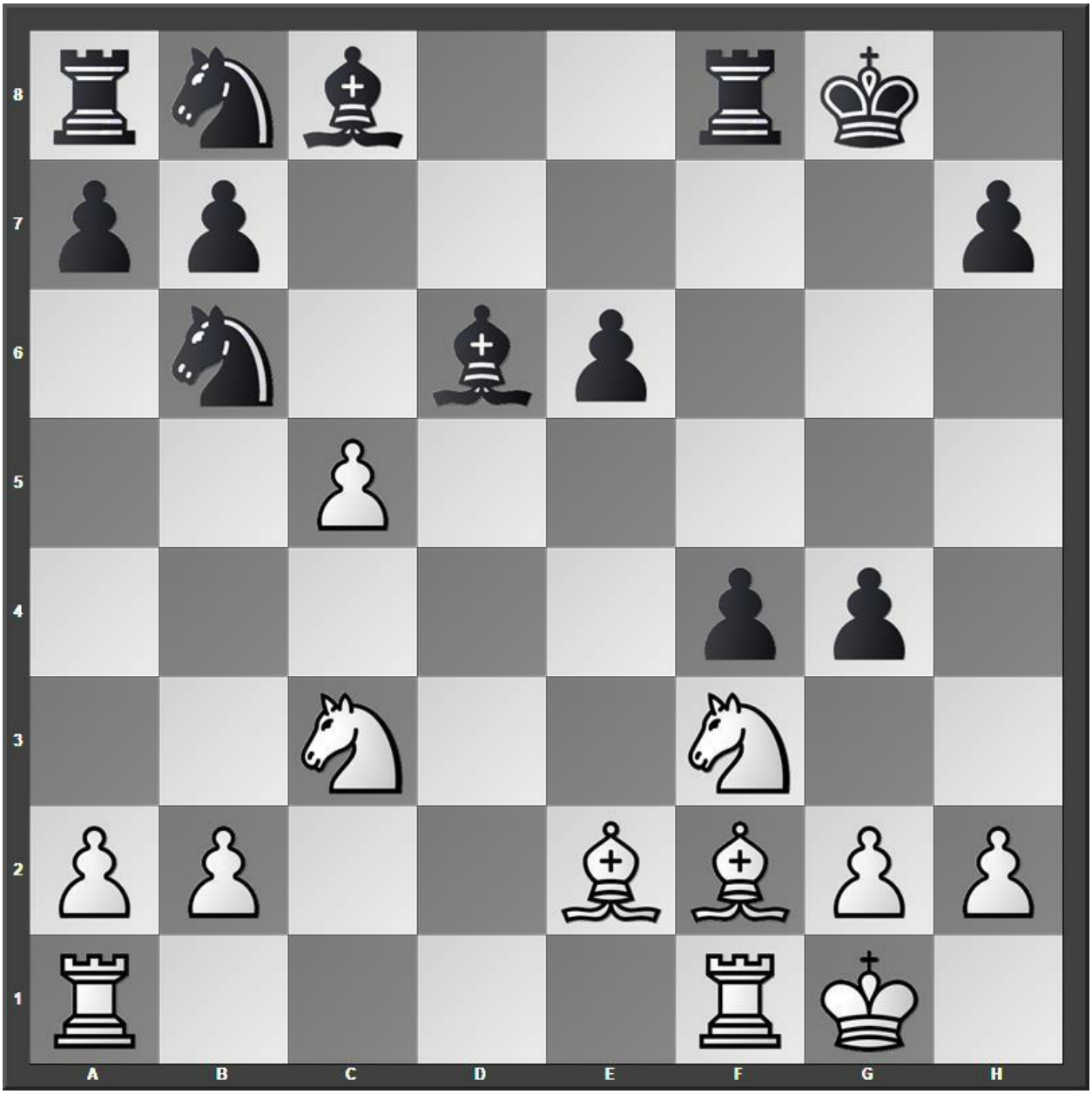
**15…Qxd6**

Or 15...Bf6 16.c5 N6d7 17.Bc4 White has the advantage.

**16.Qxd6 Bxd6**

Now I should win a piece with a pawn fork.

**17.c5 g4**



I miss the best line: 18.Ne1 g3 19.hxg3 fxg3 20.Be3 Rxf1+ 21.Kxf1 Bc7 22.cxb6 axb6 23.Nf3 White is up a piece.

**18.cxd6 gxf3**

**19.Bxf3 Nc6**

**20.Rad1 Bd7**

**21.Bh4 Nc4**

**22.Rf2 Ne3**

**23.Re1 Nf5**

If 23...Rac8 24.Bg5 e5 25.Nd5 White stands better.

If 24.Bg5 White has better chances in a messy position.

**24.Bxc6 bxc6**

Or 24...Bxc6 25.Rxf4 and White remains a pawn ahead.

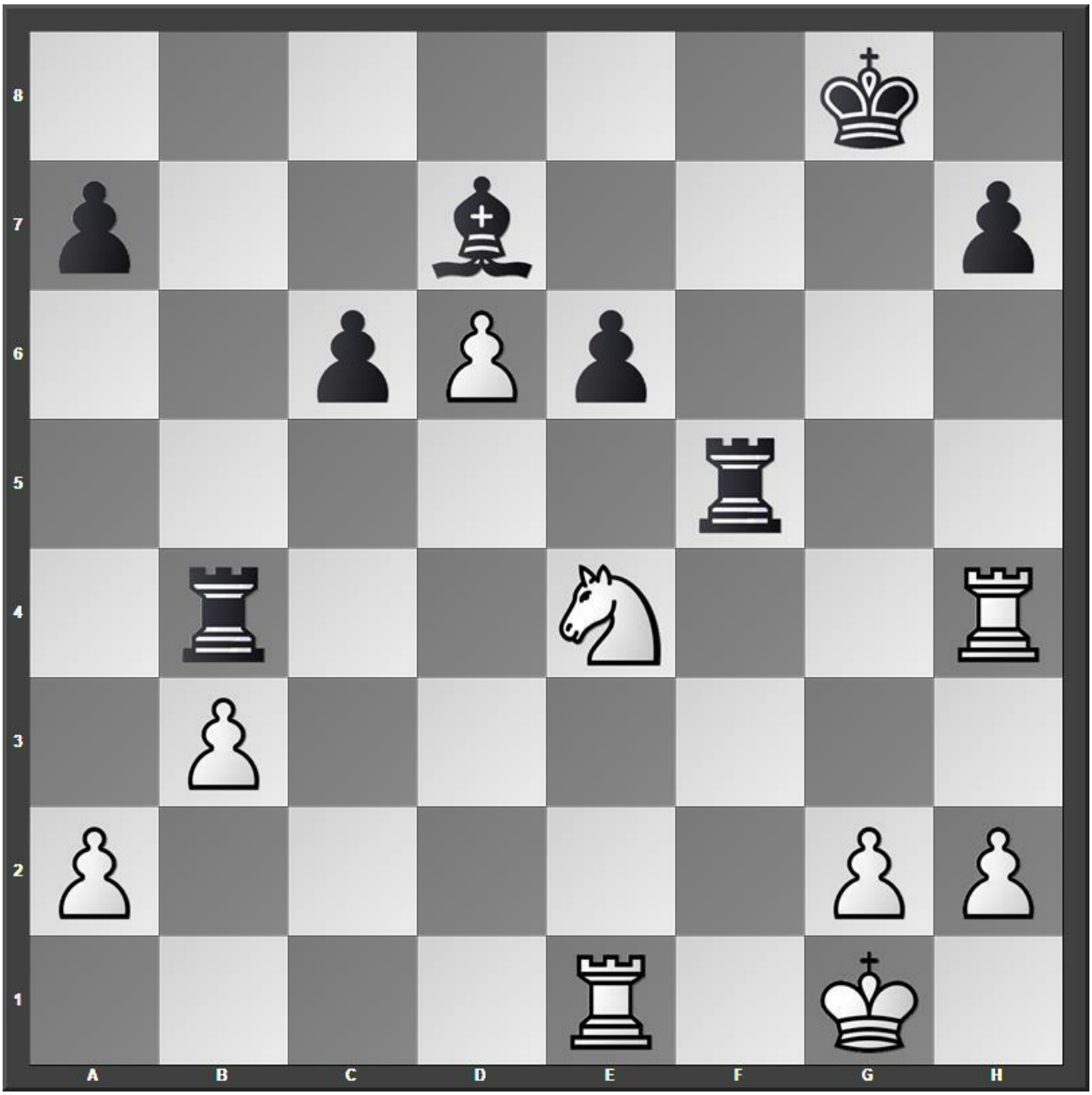
**25.Rxf4 Nxh4**

**26.Rxh4 Rab8**

**27.b3 Rf5**

**28.Ne4 Rb4**

If 28...Rbb5 29.Nc3 Rbc5 30.Re3 White is a pawn ahead.



**29.Nf6+ Kf7**

White will win the hanging rook on b4. Another possibility is 29...Rxf6 30.Rxb4 and White is up the Exchange.

**30.Rxb4 1–0**

Black resigns

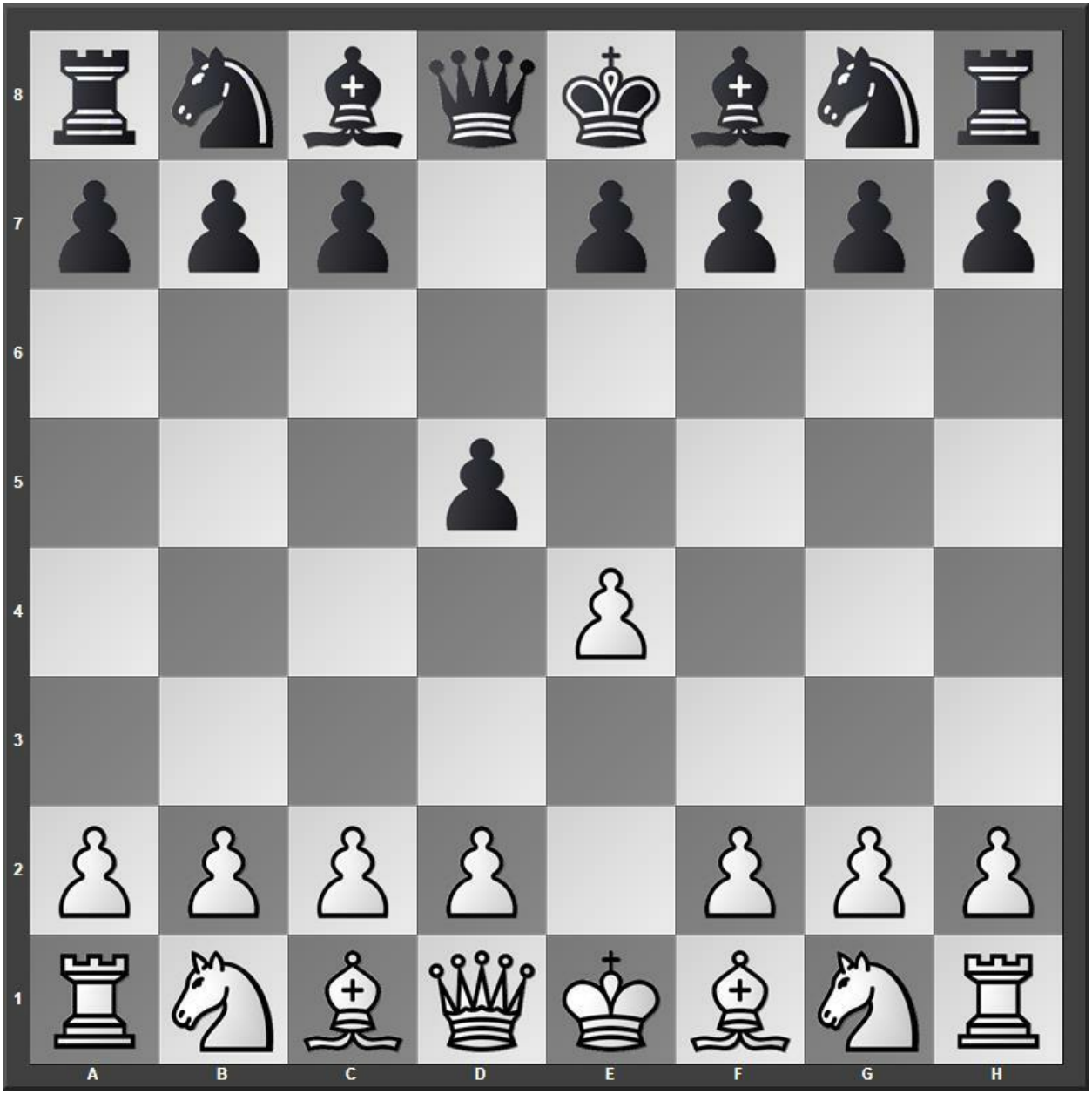
# Chapter 4 – Scandinavian 1.e4 d5

## Game 18 – B01 [2.e5 c5 3.h3 Nc6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 15.01.2022

**1.e4 d5**

The Black d5 pawn challenges the pawn on e4 to a duel. White decides if both pawns remain on the board or not.



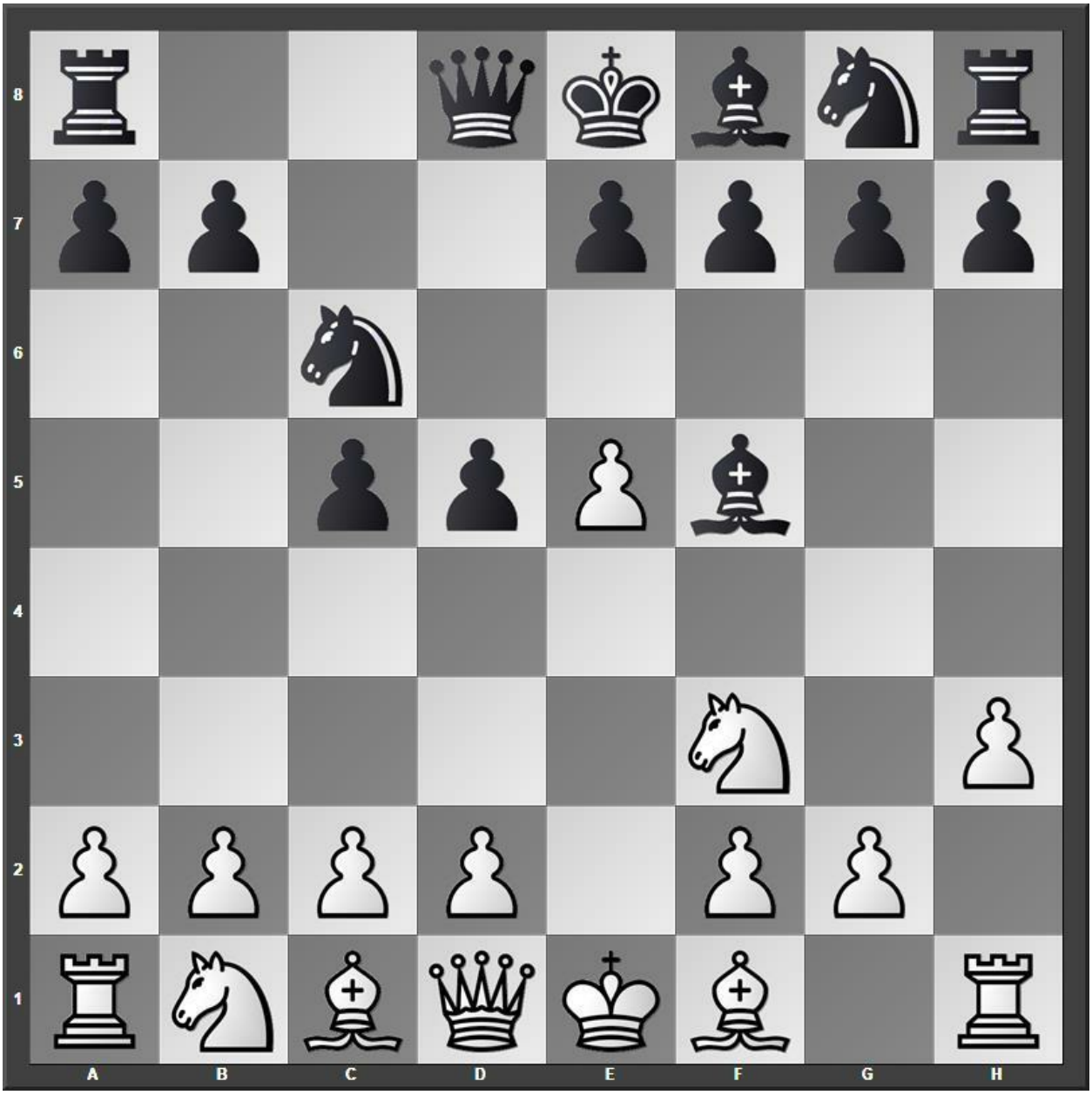
White usually captures by 2.exd5. If 2.Nc3, Black chooses between 2…d4 or 2…dxe4. Sometimes I play 2.d4 dxe4 heading toward the Blackmar-Diemer Gambit. In this game White advances to 2.e5 in the style of the French Defence.

**2.e5 c5**

Black's pawns attack e4 and d4. My strategy is to develop the light-squared bishop to f5 before I push a pawn to e6.

**3.h3 Nc6**

**4.Nf3 Bf5**



Black has a smooth development. White has not moved anything on the queenside, but it's still early. My opponent could continue 5.Bb5 Qb6 which offers to equal chances.

**5.d3 e6**

**6.Nc3 Qa5**

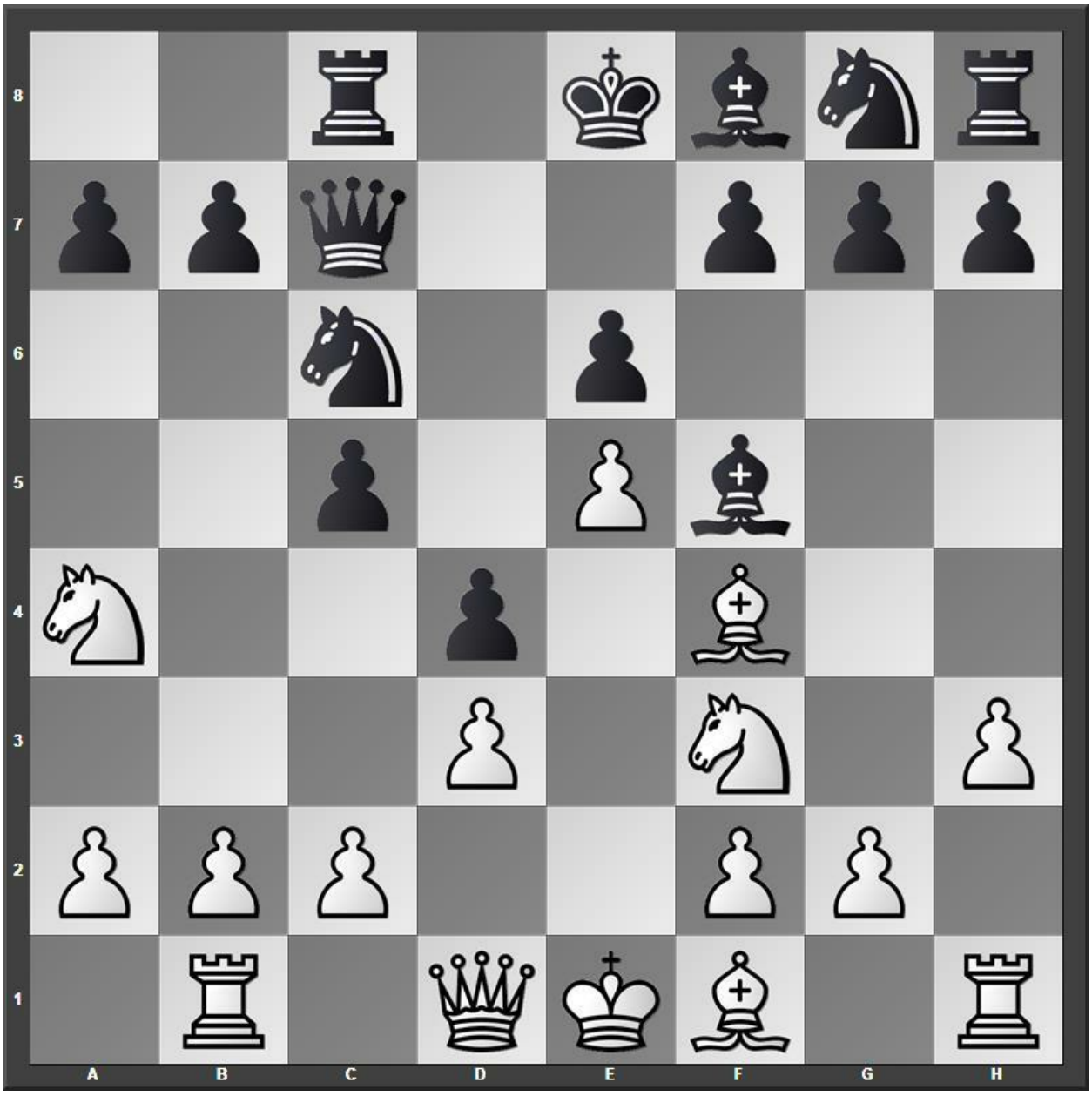
My queen pins the c3 knight with the threat of 7…d4.

**7.Bd2 Qb6**

**8.Rb1 Rc8**

**9.Na4 Qc7**

**10.Bf4 d4**



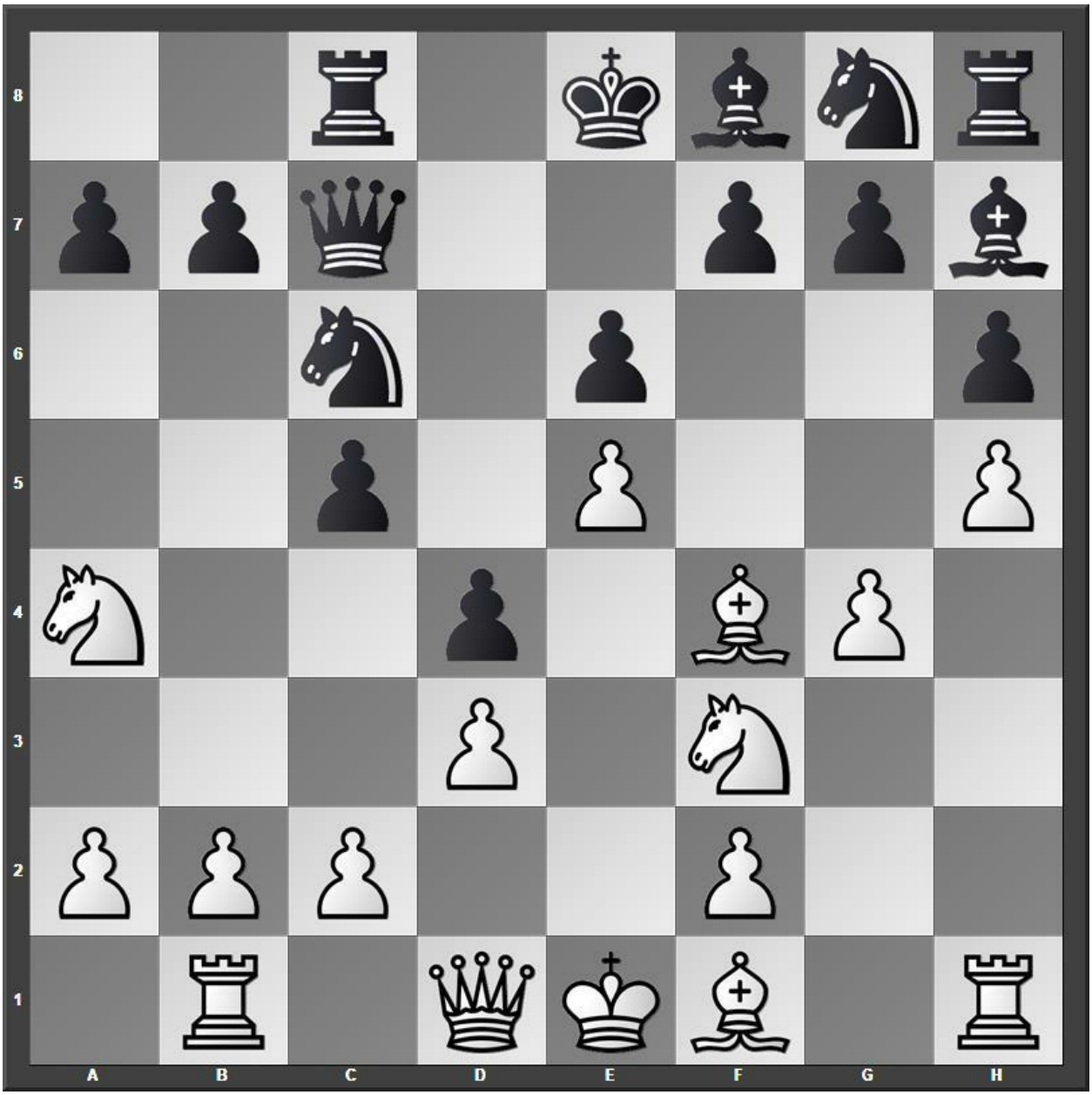
Black takes away c3 for the knight. Now if I were playing White, I'd continue with 11.b3 to give my knight an escape. My opponent goes on the offensive and attacks my bishop.

**11.g4 Bg6**

**12.h4 h6**

Or 12...h5 13.gxh5 Bxh5 and Black stands better.

**13.h5 Bh7**



**14.Bh3**

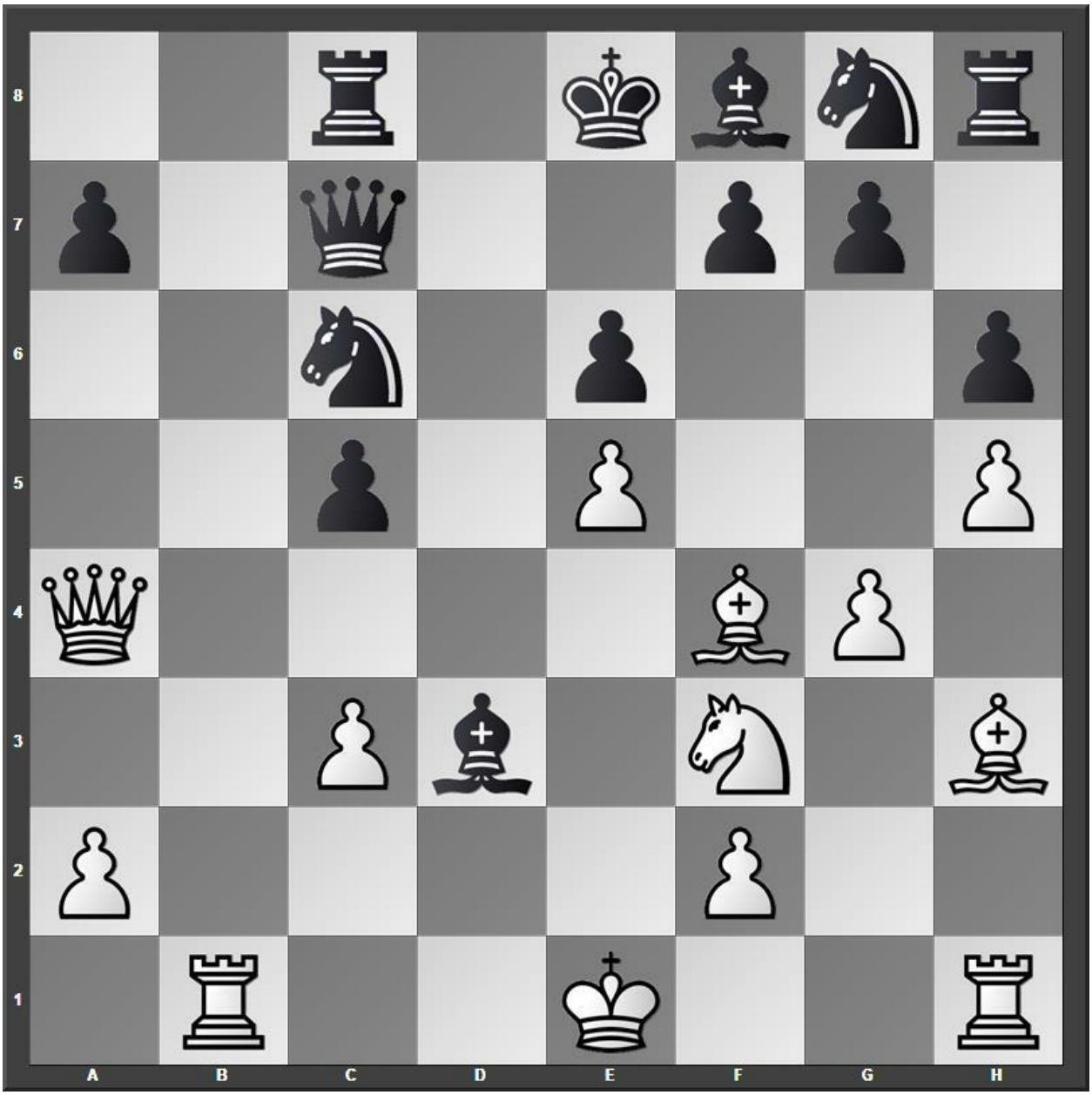
White still needs to play 14.b3 to save the a4 knight.

**14...b5**

**15.c3 bxa4**

**16.Qxa4 dxc3**

**17.bxc3 Bxd3**



Black has won a knight. White plays on for a dozen moves.

**18.Rc1**

Or 18.Rd1 c4 19.Bf1 Nge7 20.Bxd3 cxd3 21.Rxd3 Nd5 and Black remains a piece ahead.

**18...Qa5**

**19.Qxa5 Nxa5**

Black's task is simpler with the queens off the board. My pieces work their way to the queenside and force the win.

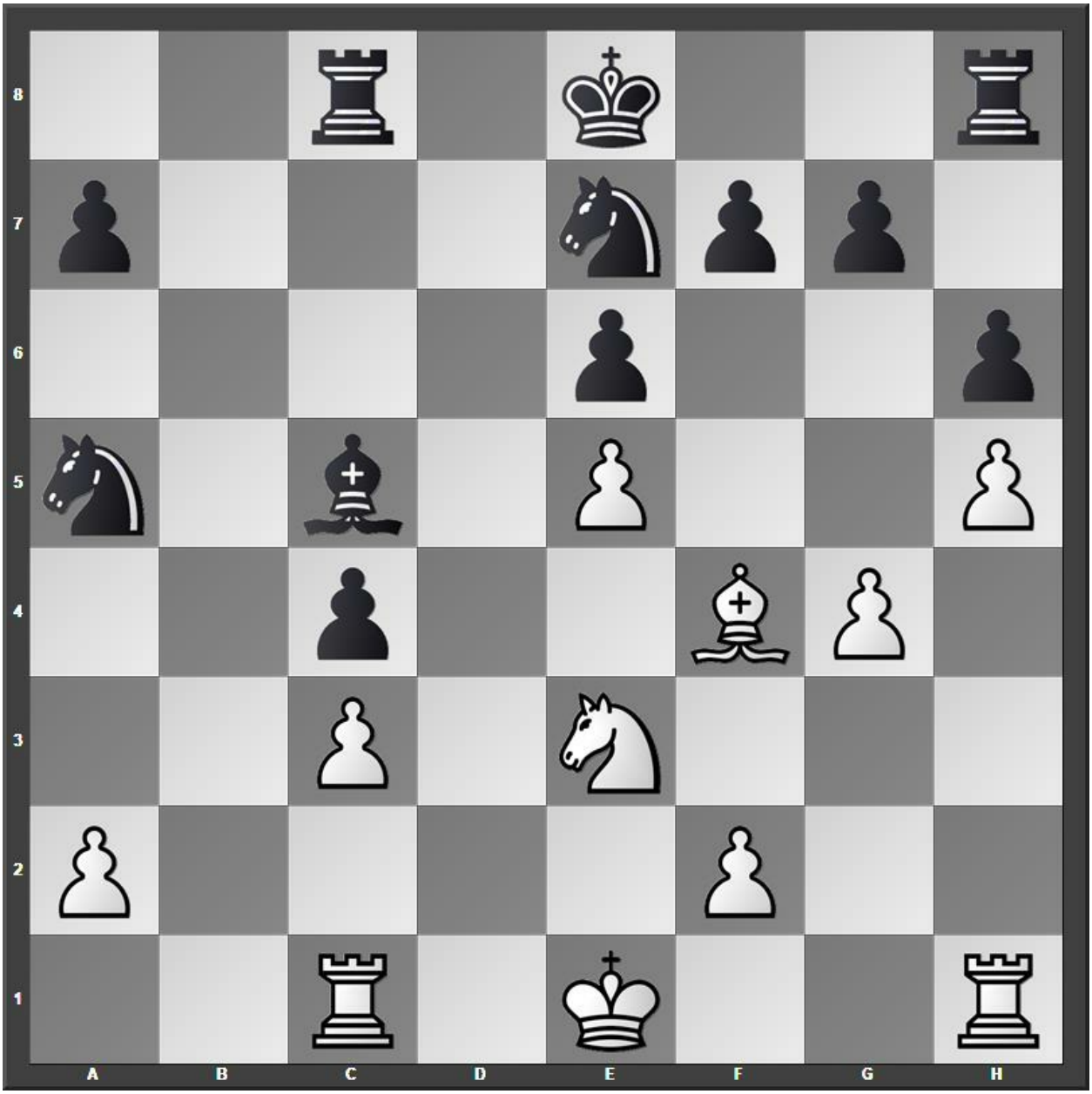
**20.Nd2 c4**

**21.Bf1 Bxf1**

Or 21...Ba3 22.Rd1 Bc2 23.Rb1 Bxb1 wins the Exchange.

**22.Nxf1 Bc5**

**23.Ne3 Ne7**



**24.0–0**

Or 24.Ke2 Bxe3 25.Bxe3 Nac6 26.f4 Rb8 27.Rhd1 Nd5 with advantage to Black.

**24...0–0**

**25.Rb1 Rb8**

**26.Rxb8 Rxb8**

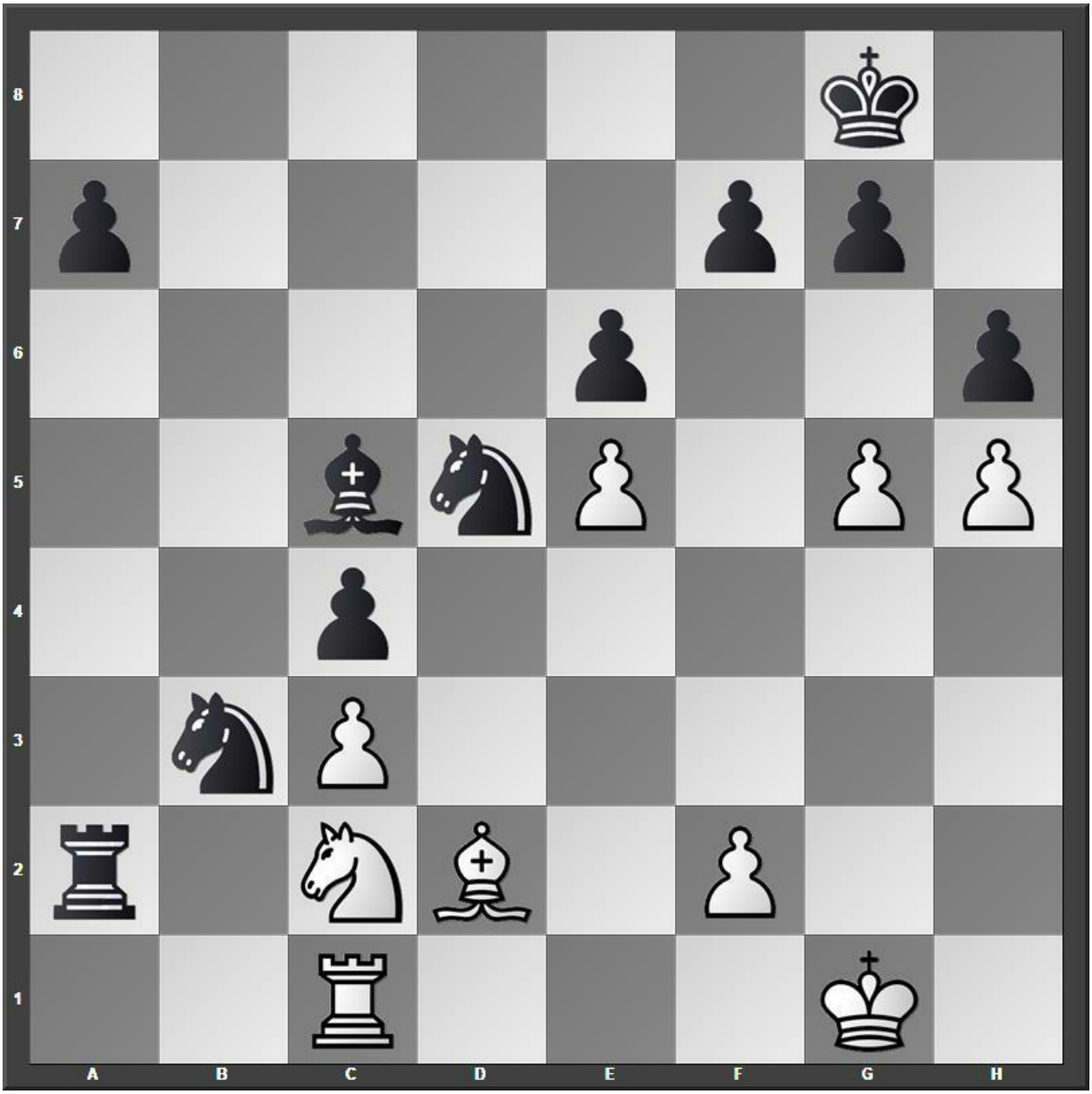
If 27.g5 Bxe3 28.fxe3 hxg5 29.Bxg5 Nd5 and Black is winning.

**27.Nc2 Nd5**

**28.Bd2 Rb2**

**29.Rc1 Rxa2**

**30.g5 Nb3 0–1**



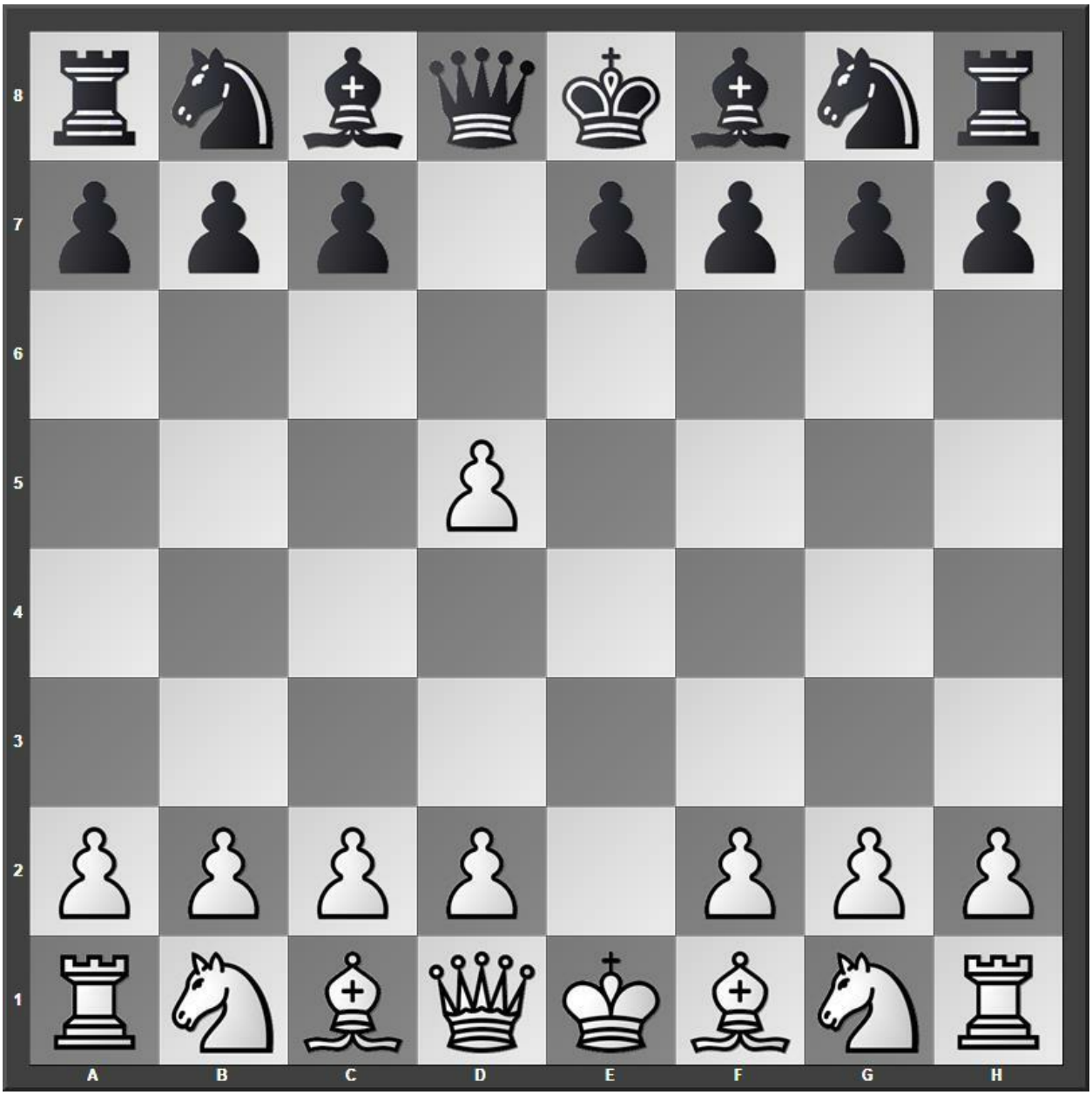
White resigns

## Game 19 – B01 [2.exd5 e6 3.dxe6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 22.01.2022

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5**

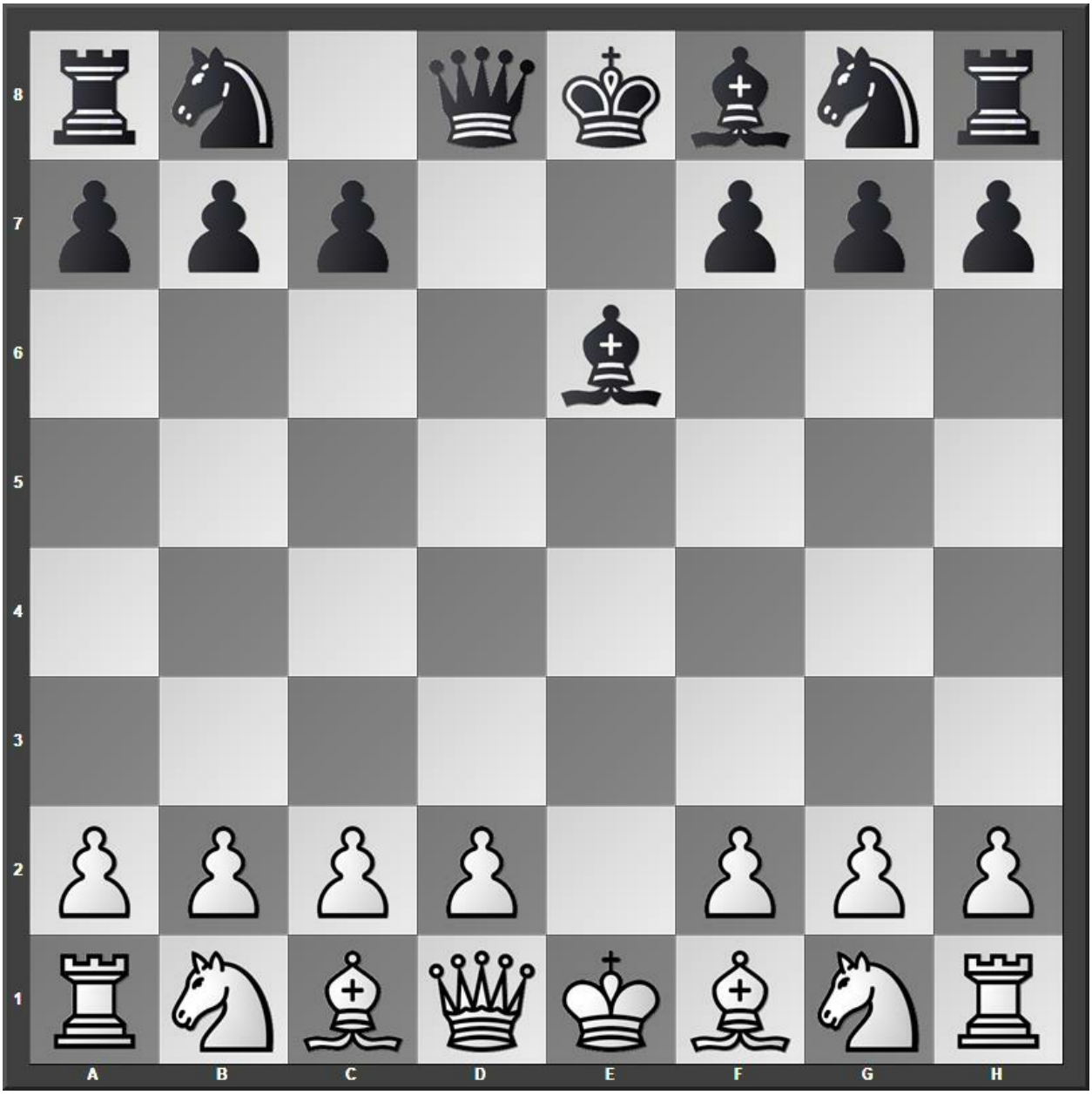


This capture temporarily leaves White with an extra pawn. It is decision time for Black to recapture or play a gambit.

**2…e6**

Here’s a gambit one sees from time to time. I don’t trust it for Black, but it works against weak play. No Guest played it vs me while I was doing this project, so I tried it myself.

**3.dxe6 Bxe6**




Black’s lead in development quickly disappears. White must demonstrate the ability to use the pieces effectively.

**4.Nc3 Nf6**

**5.d3**

This seems like the perfect move I needed to face for this game. More active is 5.Nf3 Bd6 6.d4 0–0 7.Bd3 Nc6 8.0–0.

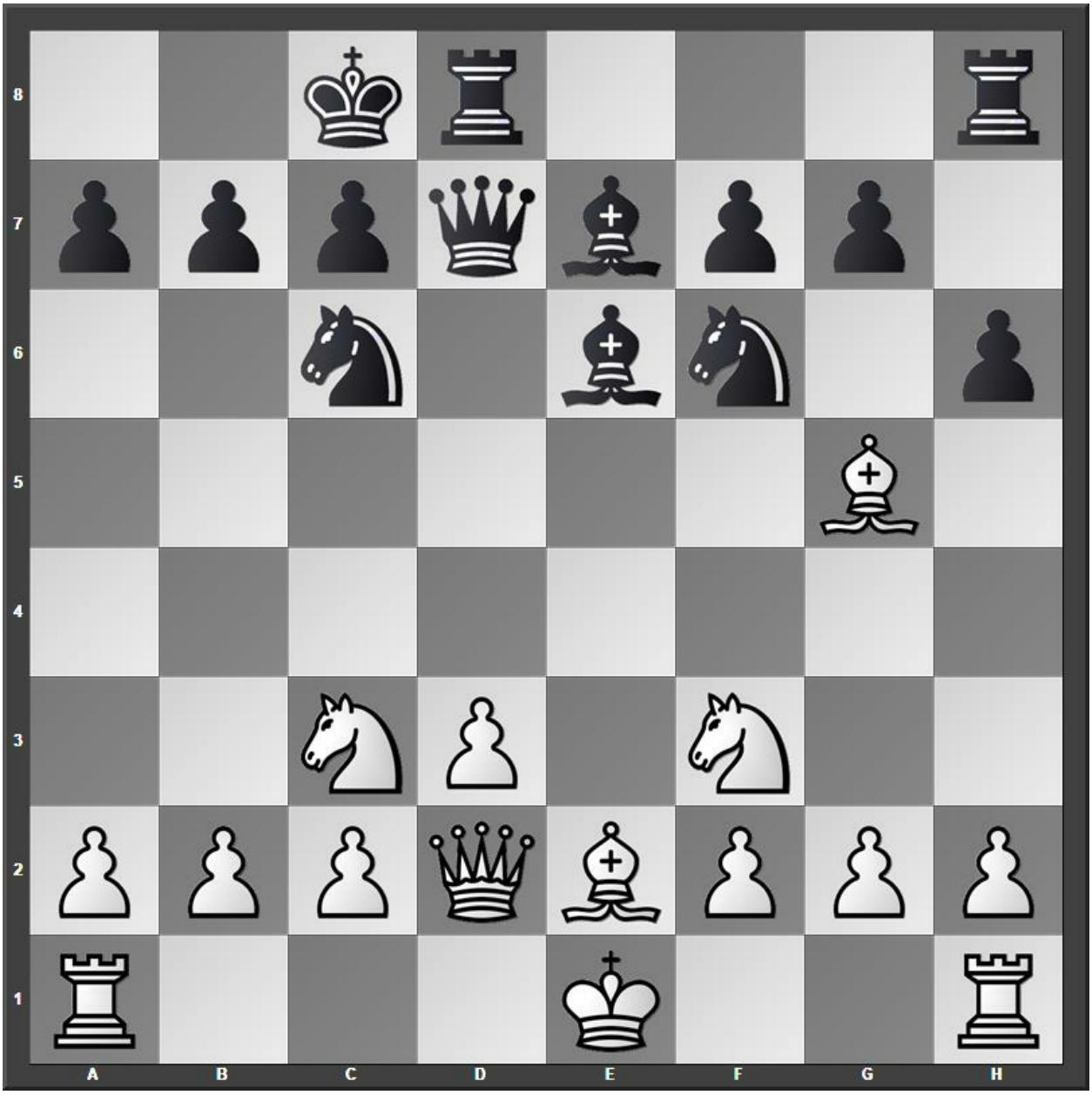
**5...Nc6**

**6.Nf3 Qd7**

**7.Be2 0–0–0**

**8.Bg5 Be7**

**9.Qd2 h6**



Decision time. My h6 pawn forces White to either give up a bishop for a knight or help my kingside pawns to advance.

**10.Bh4 g5**

**11.Bg3 Bb4**

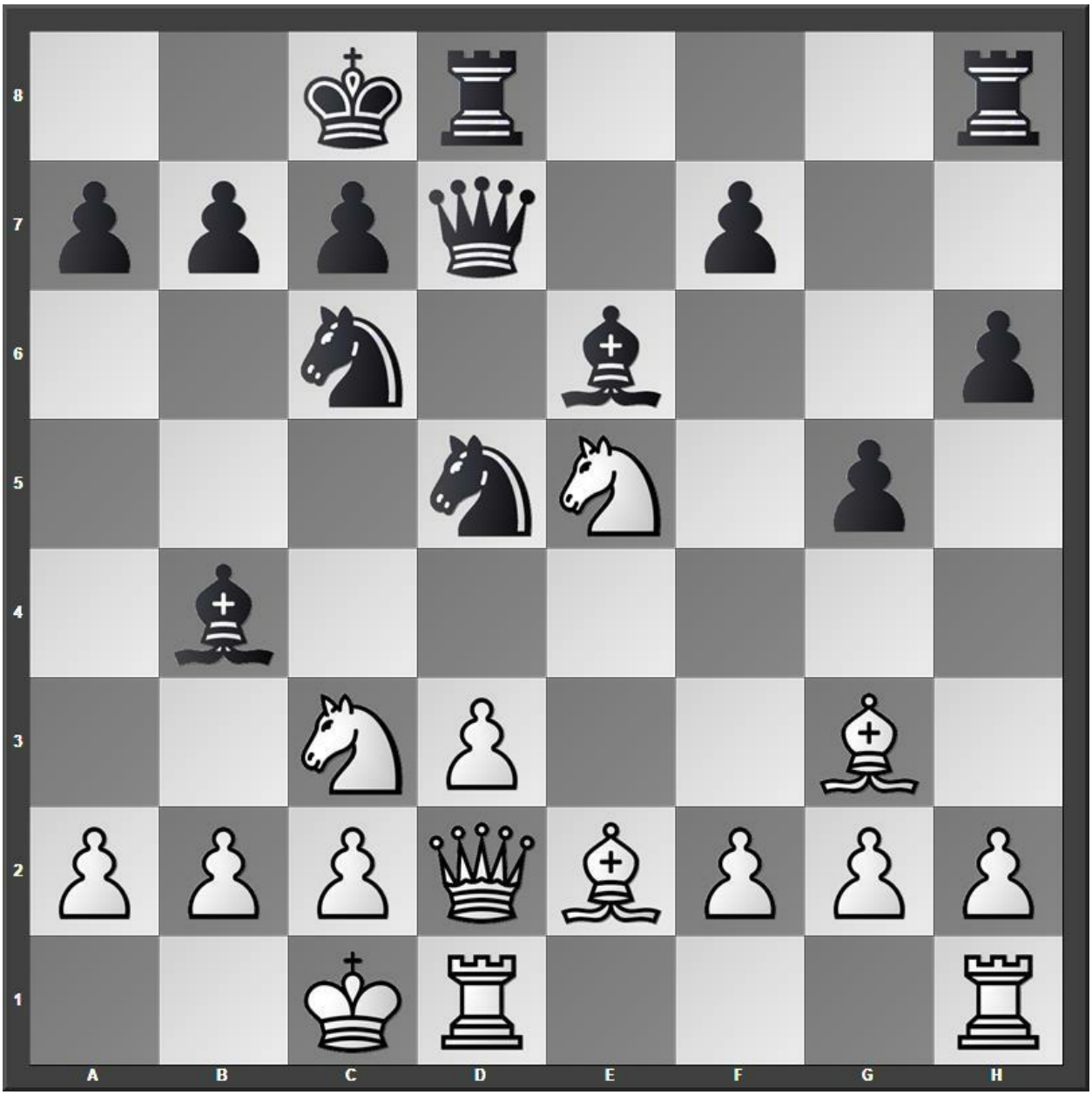
**12.0–0–0**

A new target. Or 12.0–0 Qe8 with chances for both sides.

**12...Nd5**

Black pressures the pinned c3 knight.

**13.Ne5**



**13…Nxe5**

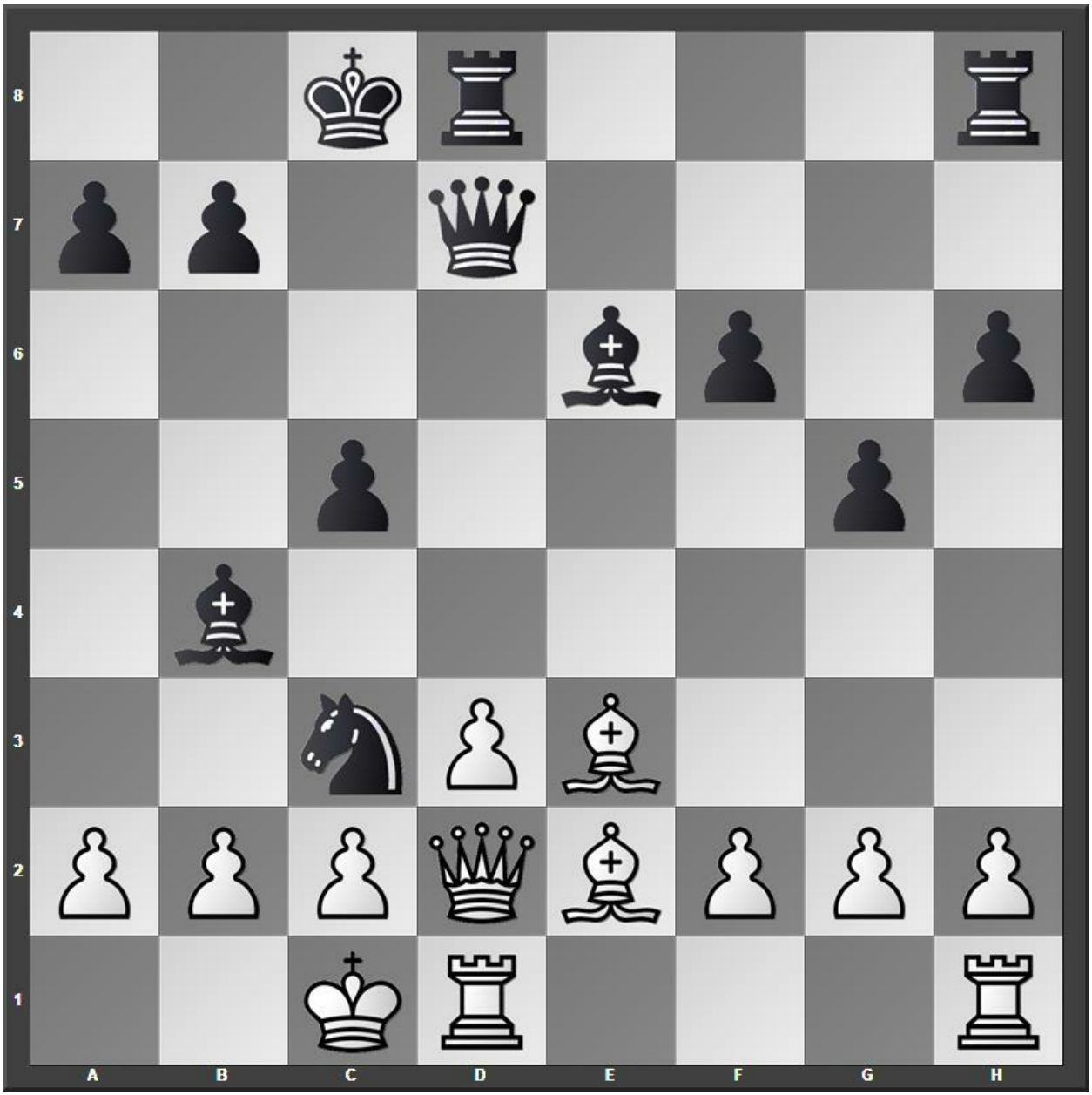
Promising is 13...Qe7 14.Nxc6 bxc6 15.Be5 f6.

**14.Bxe5 f6**

White could play 15.a3 Bxa3 16.Nxd5 with equal chances.

**15.Bd4 c5**

**16.Be3 Nxc3**



**17.bxc3**

A blunder in a losing position. The alternative is 17.Qxc3 Bxc3 18.bxc3 Bxa2 and Black wins the queen for a bishop.

**17...Ba3+**

This mate is simple, easy, obvious, and forced.

**18.Kb1 Qb5+**

**19.Ka1 Qb2# 0–1**

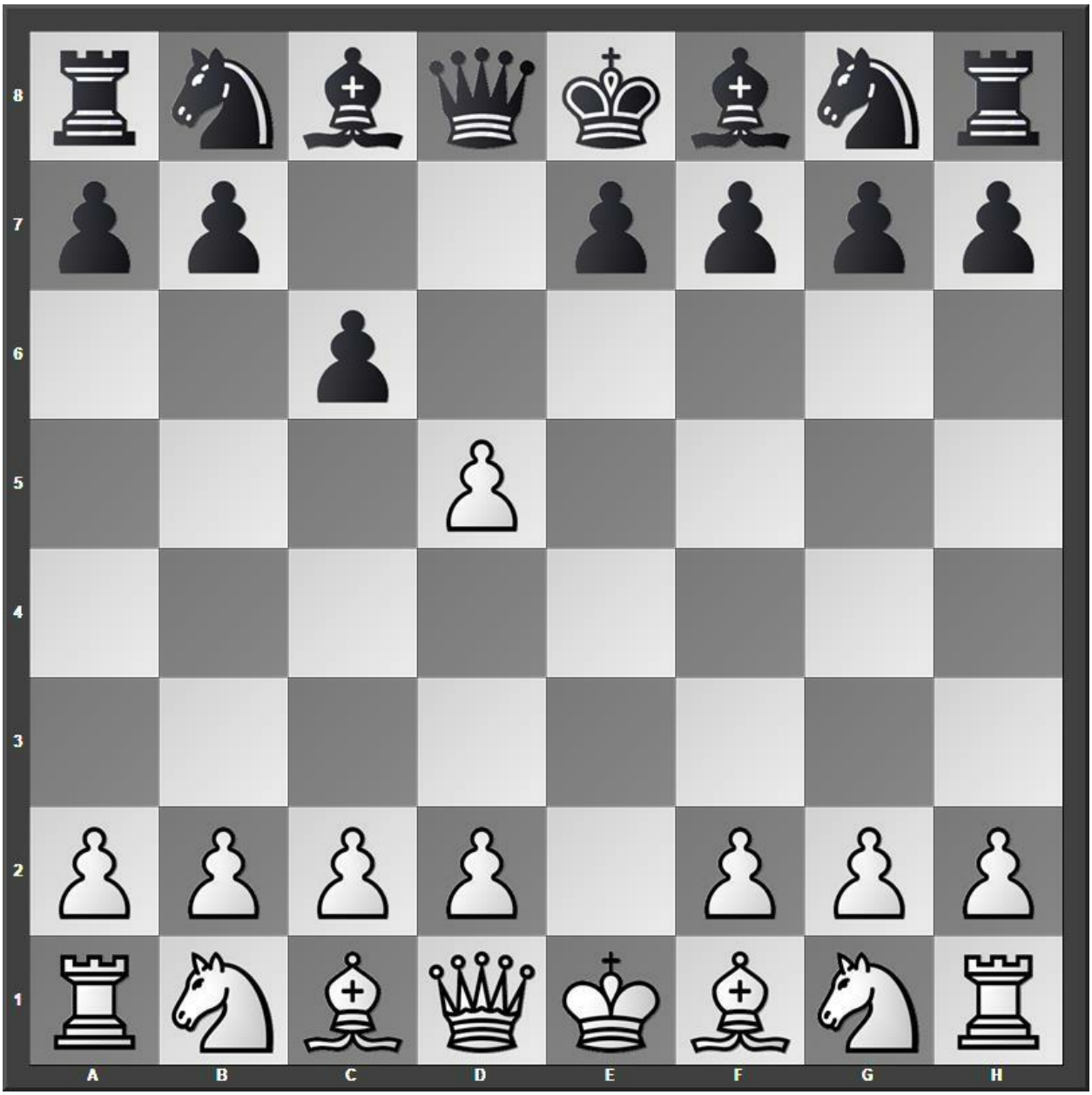
White is checkmated

## Game 20 – B01 [2.exd5 c6 3.dxc6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 23.07.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 c6**



**3.dxc6 bxc6**

Better is to recapture with the knight via 3…Nxc6.

**4.d4 a5**

Black moves another pawn piece moves are needed.

**5.Nf3 Bf5**

I challenge the good bishop move since I am up a piece.

**6.Bd3 e6**

**7.Bxf5 exf5**

My strategy in swapping bishop also gives me a four to two pawn majority on the queenside. This may come in handy.

**8.0–0 Na6**

**9.Re1+ Be7**

**10.Nc3 Nf6**

**11.Bf4 Nb4**

**12.a3**

All the minor pieces are developed. White has castled with a rook on the e-file, but Black's king is remains uncastled.

**12…c5**

This drops a knight. I planned to play 12...Nbd5 13.Nxd5.

**13.axb4 axb4**

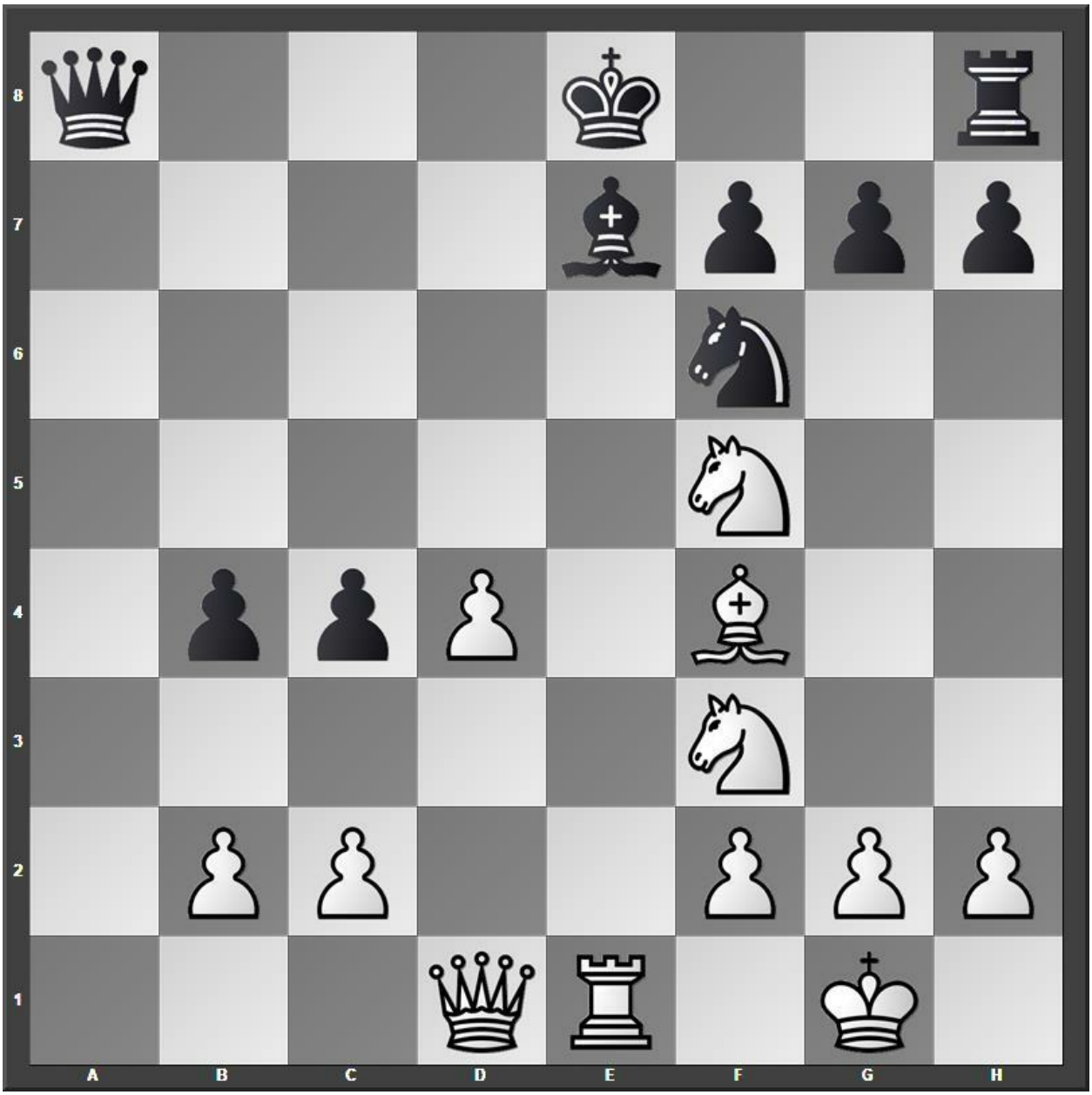
**14.Rxa8 Qxa8**

**15.Ne2 Ne4**

**16.Ng3 Nf6**

**17.Nxf5 c4**

Here I win a second minor piece.



**18.Nxe7**

18.Rxe7+ Kf8 19.Ng5 mates in a few moves.

**18...Kd7**

**19.Nf5 g6**

20.Re7+ could reach the winning position 2 moves earlier.

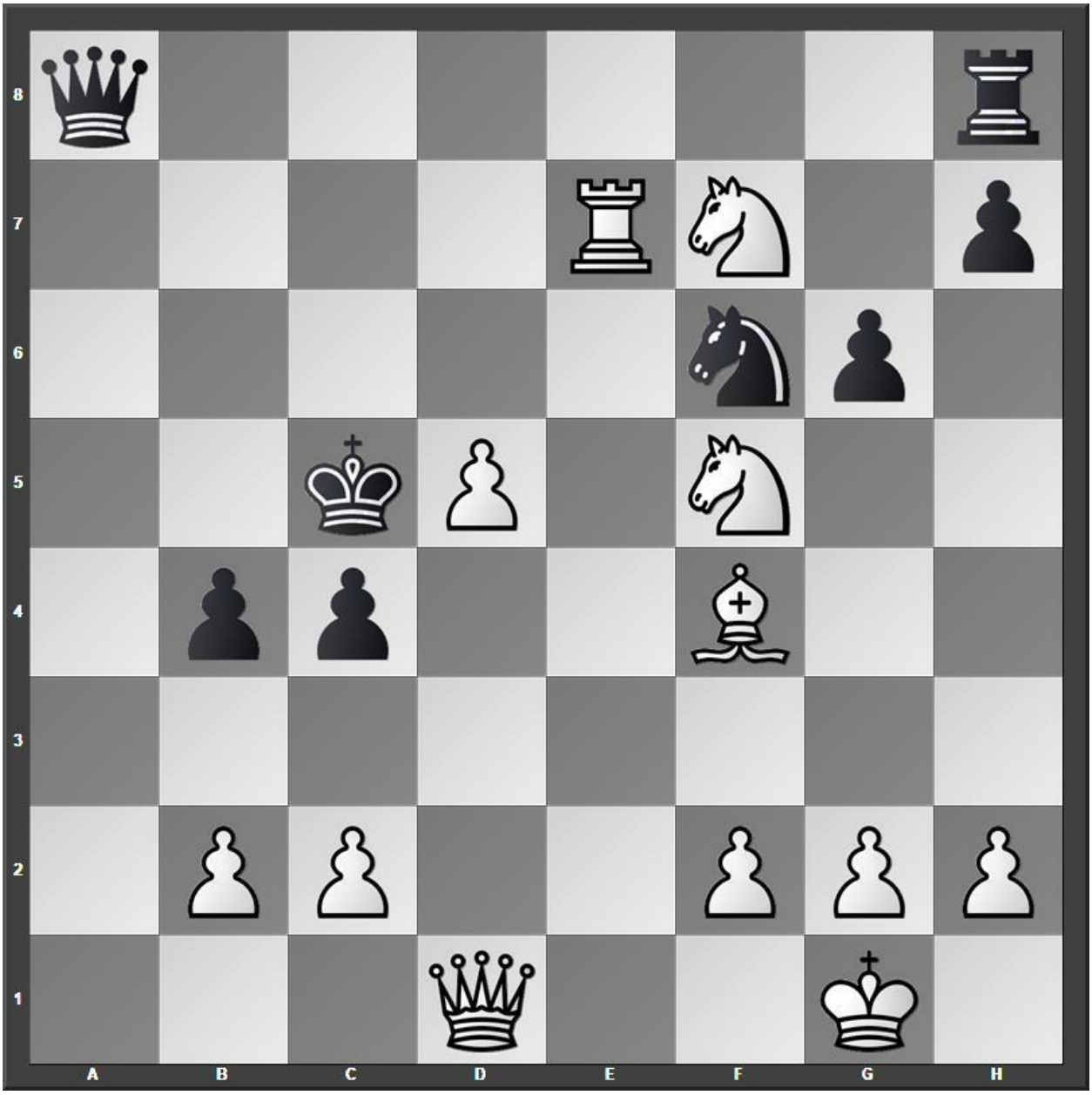
**20.Ne5+ Kd8**

**21.Nxf7+ Kd7**

**22.Re7+ Kc6**

**23.d5+ Kc5**

White has a forced mate in three moves.



**24.Be3+ Kb5**

**25.N5d6+ Ka4**

**26.Qa1# 1–0**

Black is checkmated

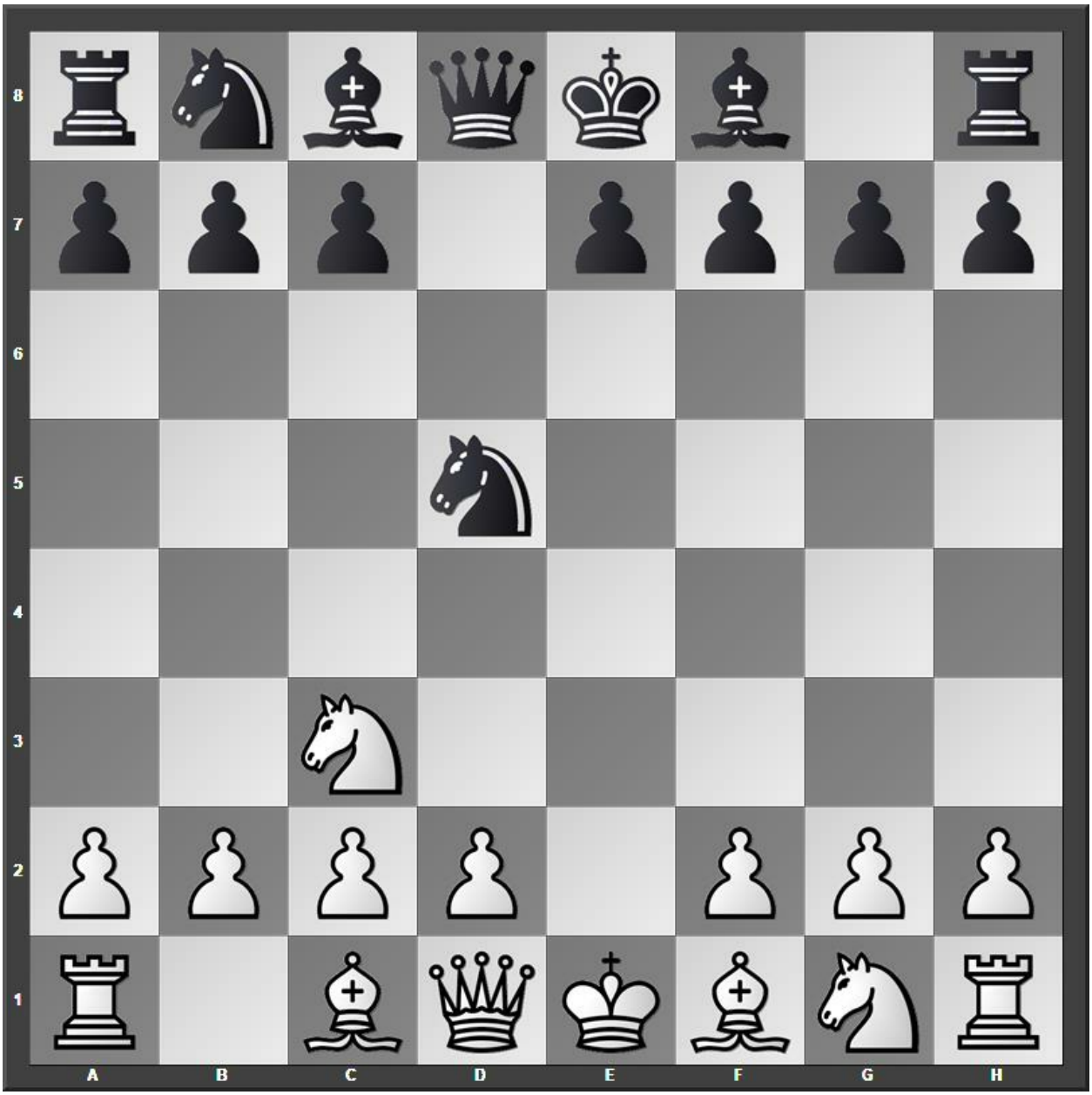
# Game 21 – B01 [2.exd5 Nf6 3.Nc3]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 21.01.2022

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Nf6**

**3.Nc3 Nxd5**



This transposes to the Alekhine 2.Nc3 d5 3.exd5 Nxd5.

**4.Nxd5**

Intermediate players often choose this. Stronger players opt for 4.Bc4 when either 4...c6 leads to equal chances.

**4...Qxd5**

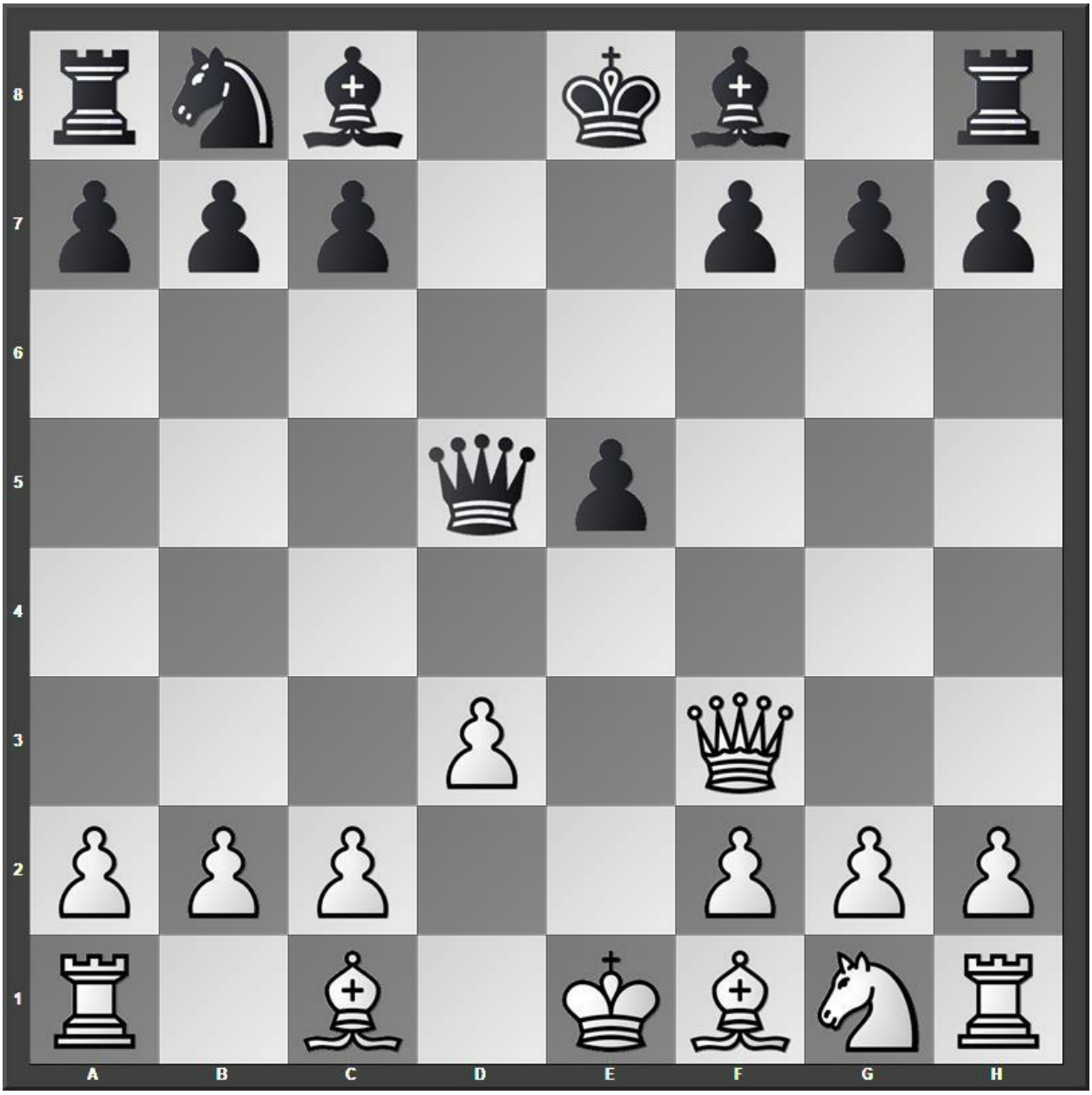
**5.d3**

After 5.Nf3 Nc6 or 5.d4 Nc6 both sides have chances.

**5...e5**

White gives me the center. I take it. Also good is 5...Nc6.

**6.Qf3**



Intermediate players play like trading pieces into an ending improves their drawing chances. The opposite is true.

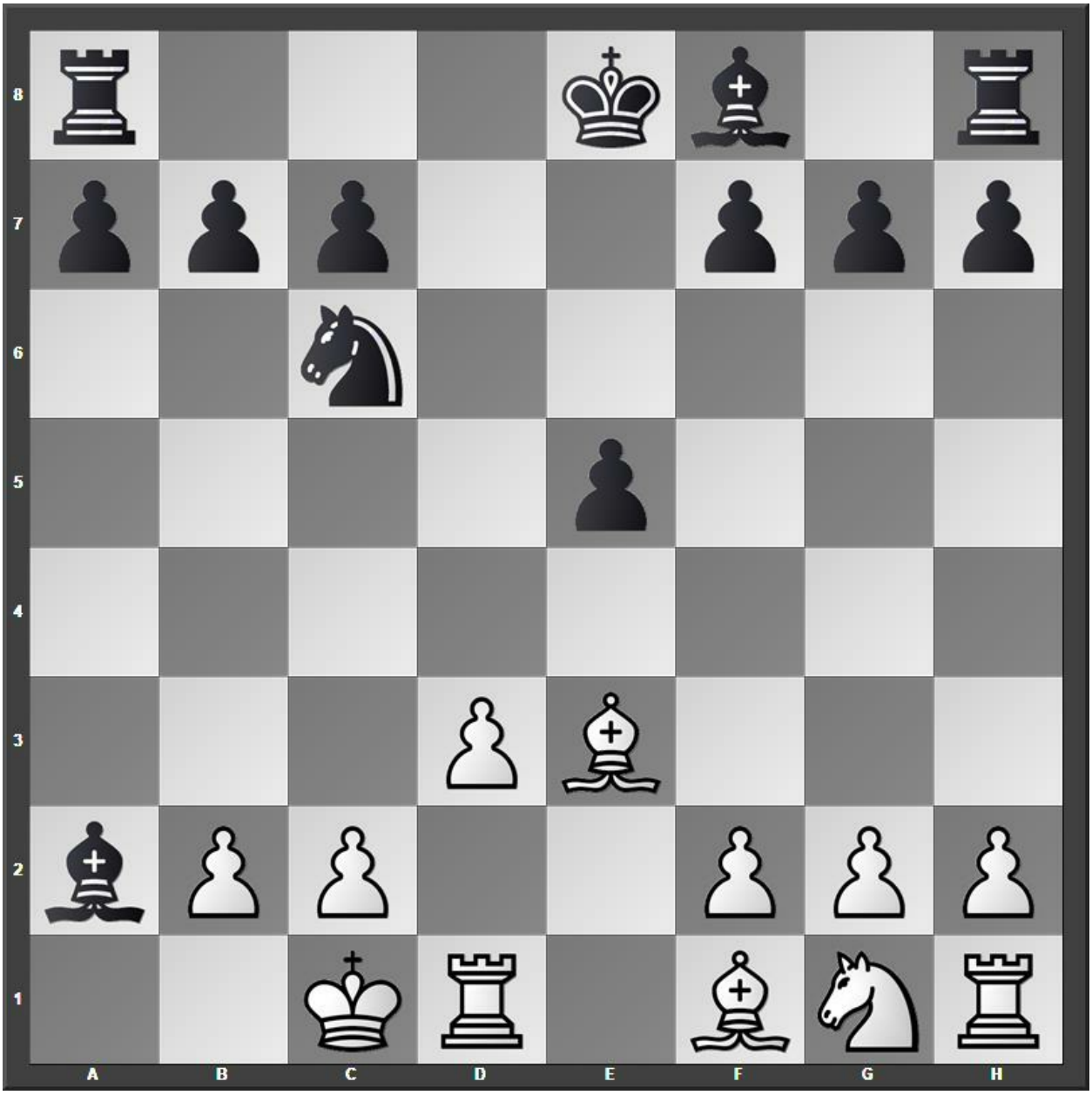
**6…Be6**

If Black wants to avoid a queen exchange, then 6...Qd6 looks reasonable.

**7.Qxd5 Bxd5**

**8.Be3 Nc6**

**9.0–0–0 Bxa2**



Black wins the a2 pawn. My strategy is to win the ending.

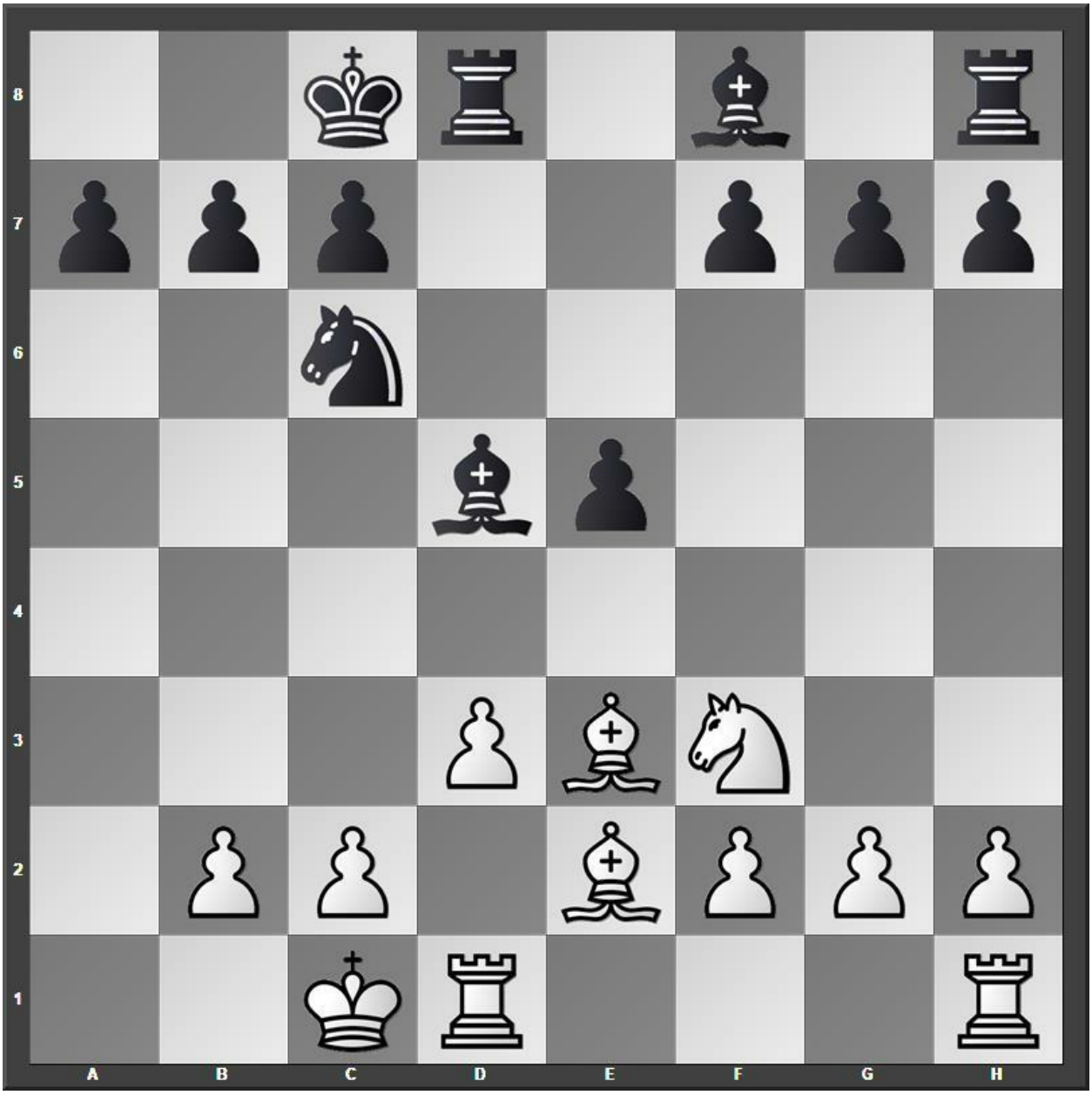
**10.Nf3**

If 10.b3 Ba3+ 11.Kd2 a5 12.Ra1 Nb4 Black keeps a pawn.

**10...Bd5**

The piece that grabs a pawn and gets away will live to fight another day.

**11.Be2 0–0–0**



**12.d4**

Maybe 12.c4 Nd4 13.Nxd4 exd4 14.cxd5 dxe3 15.fxe3 Rxd5 with an unbalanced position but Black is up a pawn.

**12...exd4**

I thought about 12...Bxf3 13.Bxf3 Nxd4 14.Bxd4 exd4 which wins a second pawn but leaves a potential bishops of opposite color ending with drawing chances.

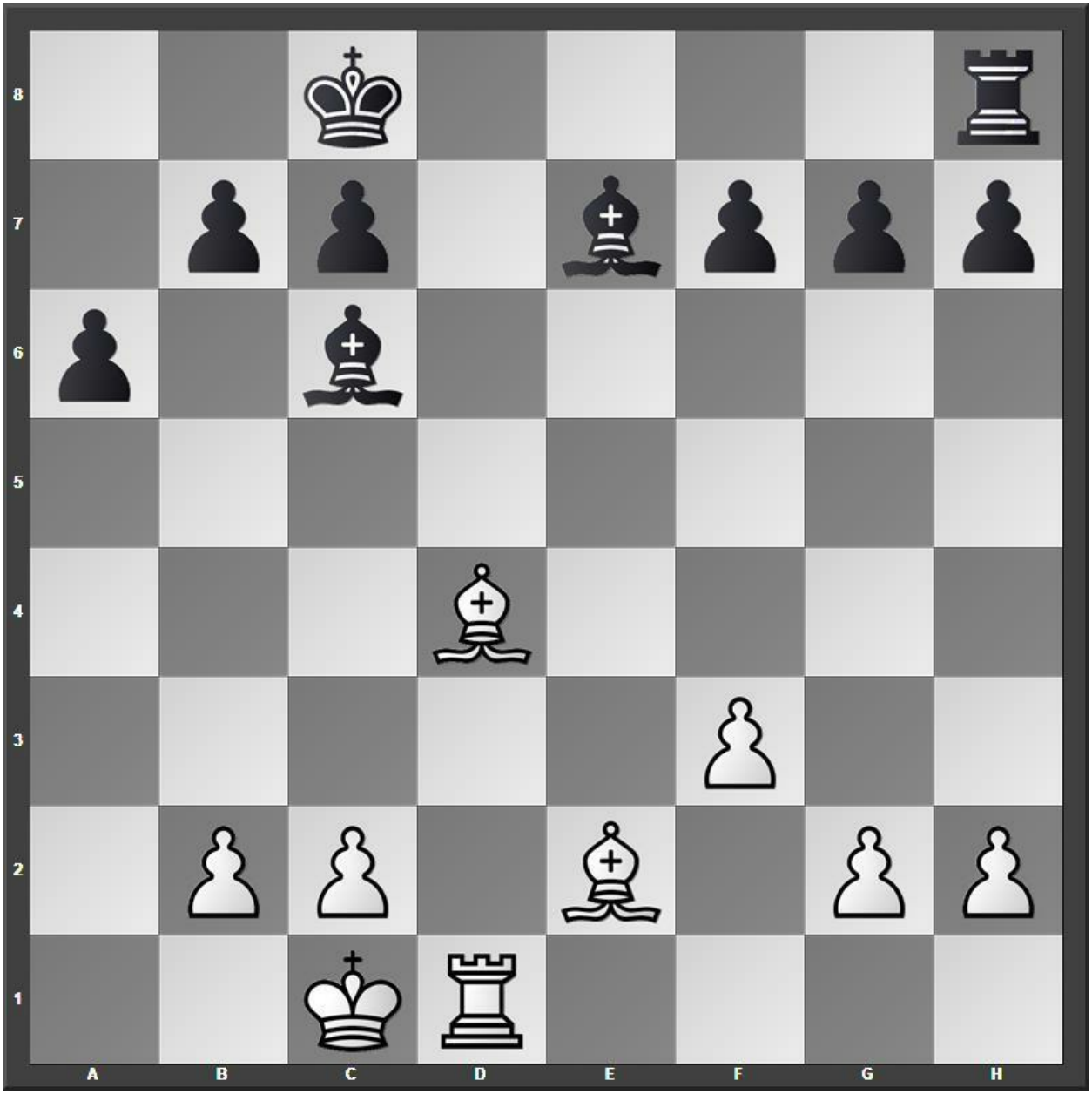
**13.Nxd4 Be7**

**14.Nxc6 Bxc6**

**15.f3 Rxd1+**

**16.Rxd1 a6**

**17.Bd4**



**17…f6**

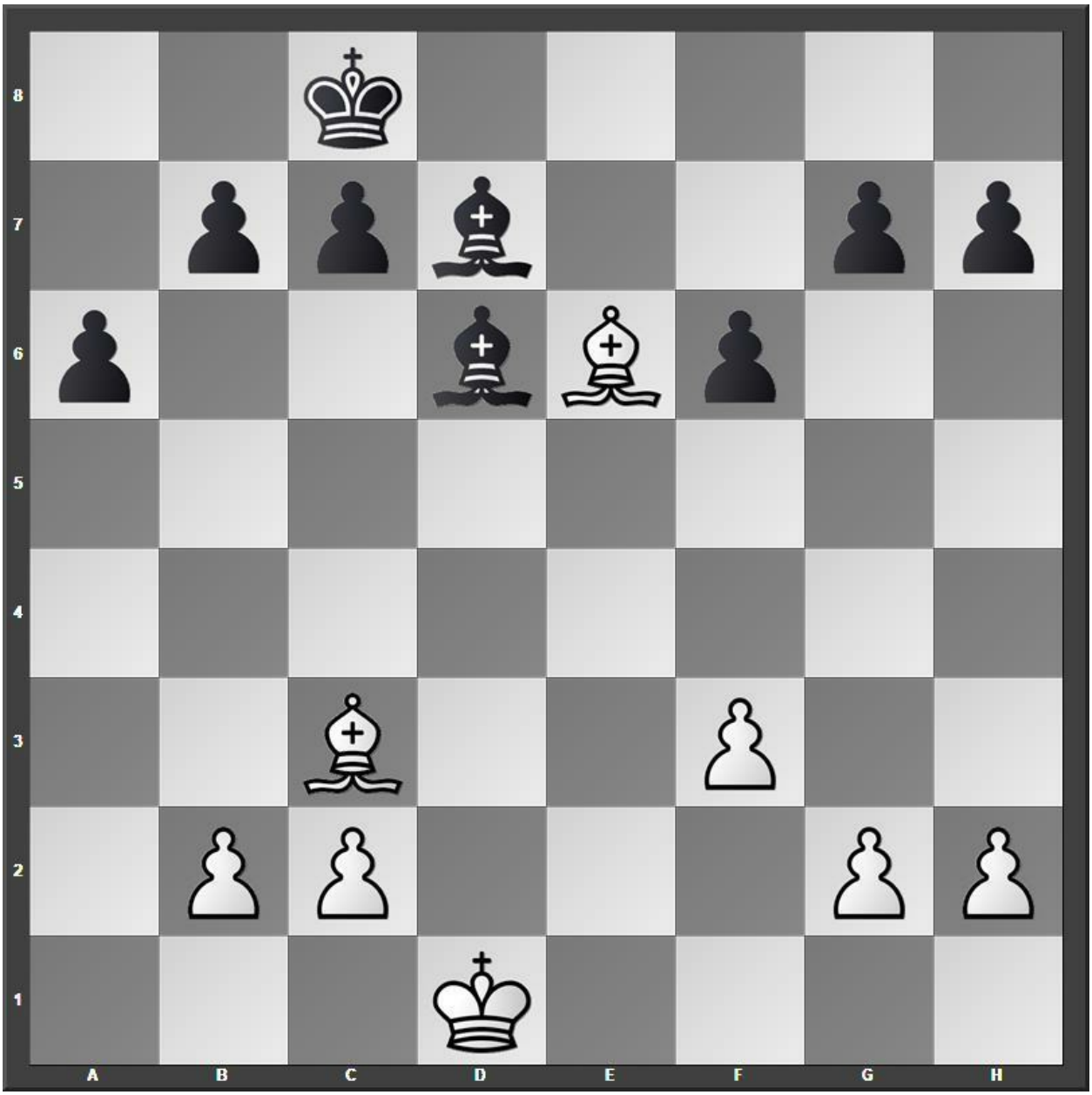
If 17...Rd8 18.Bxg7 Rg8 19.Be5 Rxg2. I want to keep my healthy pawns on the board as the endgame approaches.

**18.Bc4 Rd8**

**19.Bc3 Rxd1+**

**20.Kxd1 Bd6**

**21.Be6+ Bd7**



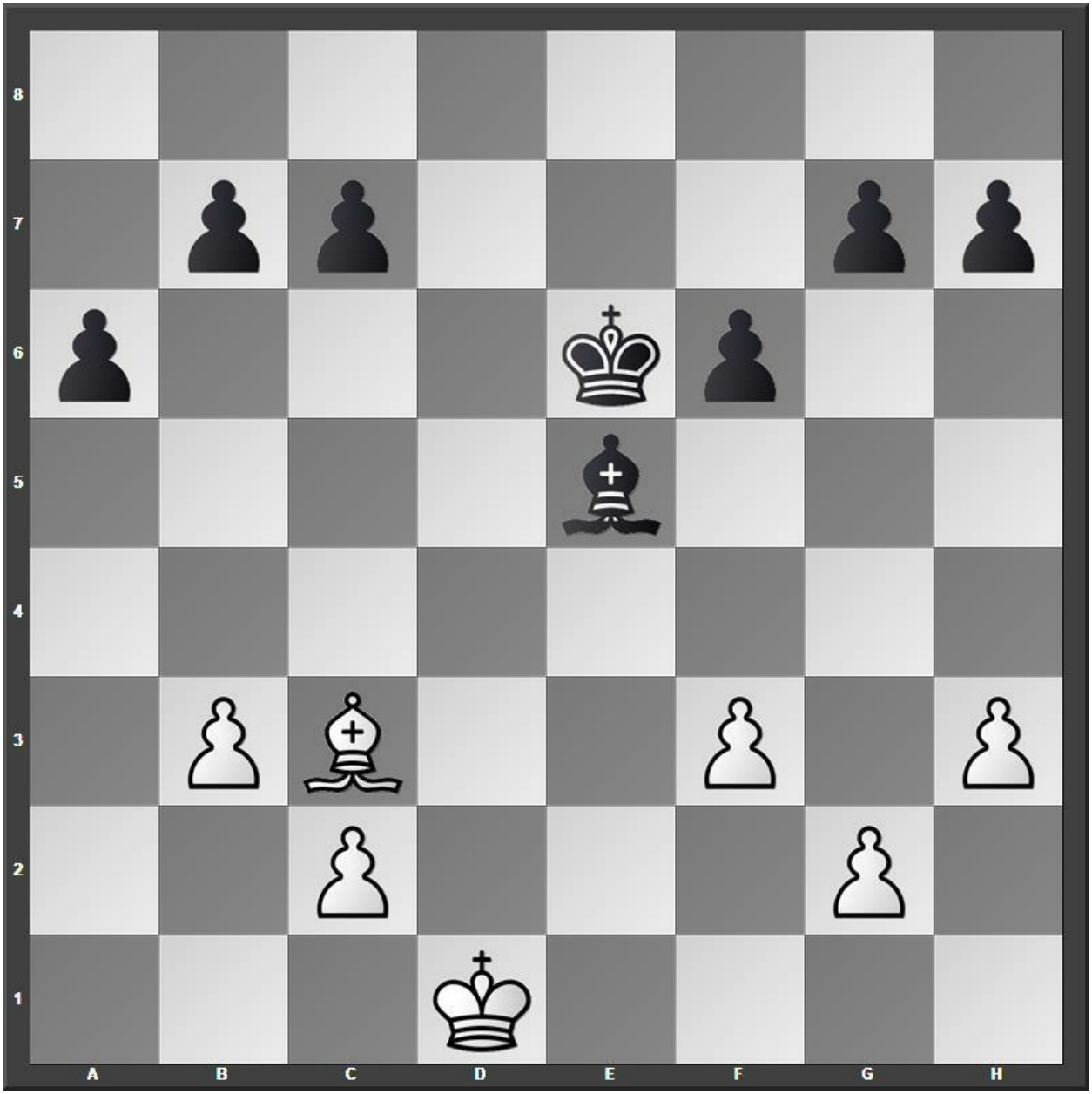
**22.Bxd7+**

Better is 22.Bg8 h6 keeping the bishops on the board.

**22...Kxd7**

**23.h3 Ke6**

**24.b3 Be5**



**25.Ke2**

I expected 25.Bxe5 Kxe5 but my opponent overlooks that I can take the bishop for free. Therefore, Black wins faster.

**25...Bxc3**

**26.Kd3 Be5**

**27.Ke4 f5+**

**28.Kd3 b5**

**29.g4 g6 0–1**

White resigns

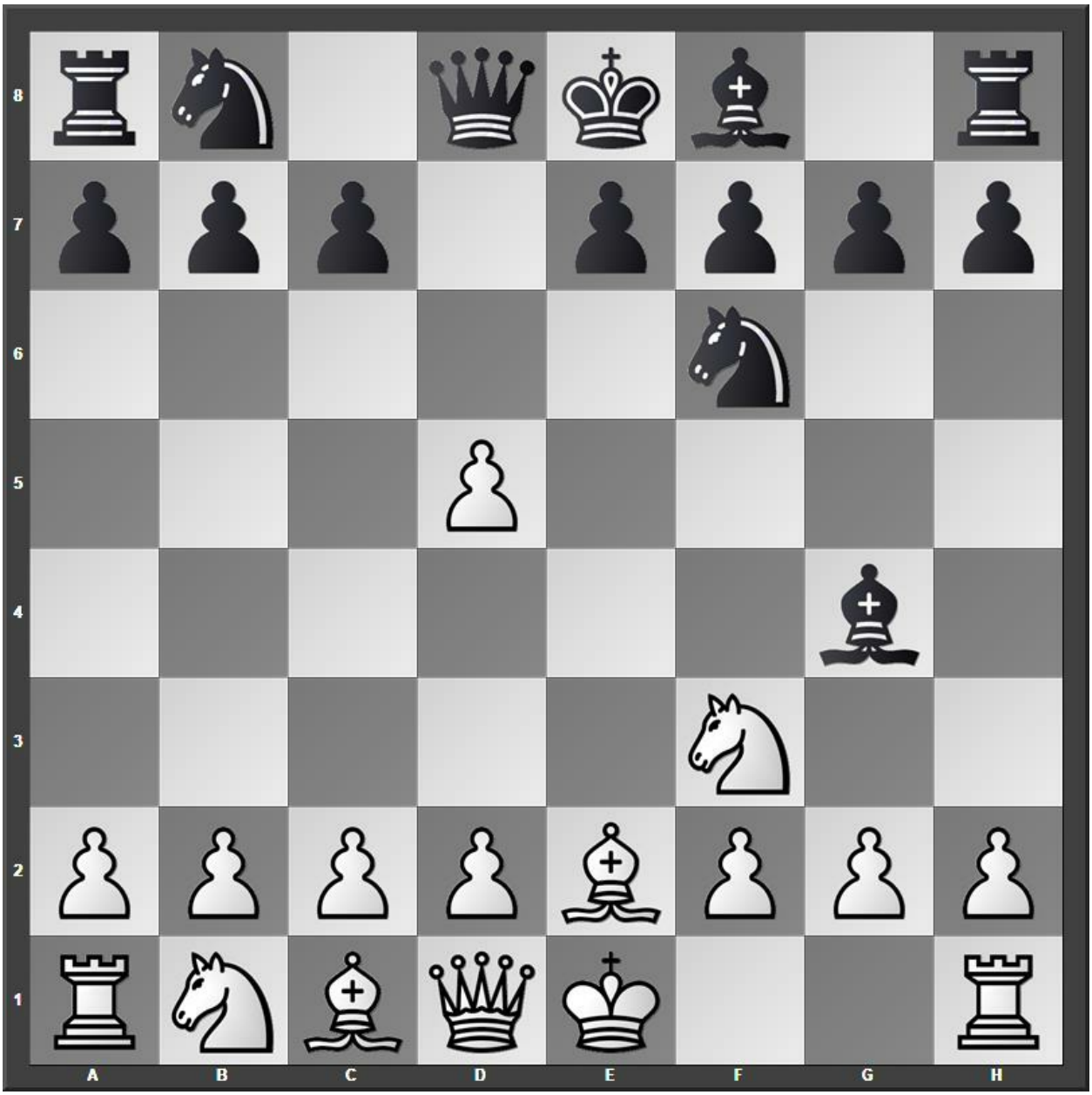
# Game 22 – B01 [2.exd5 Nf6 3.Nf3 Bg4]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 22.01.2022

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Nf6**

**3.Nf3 Bg4**



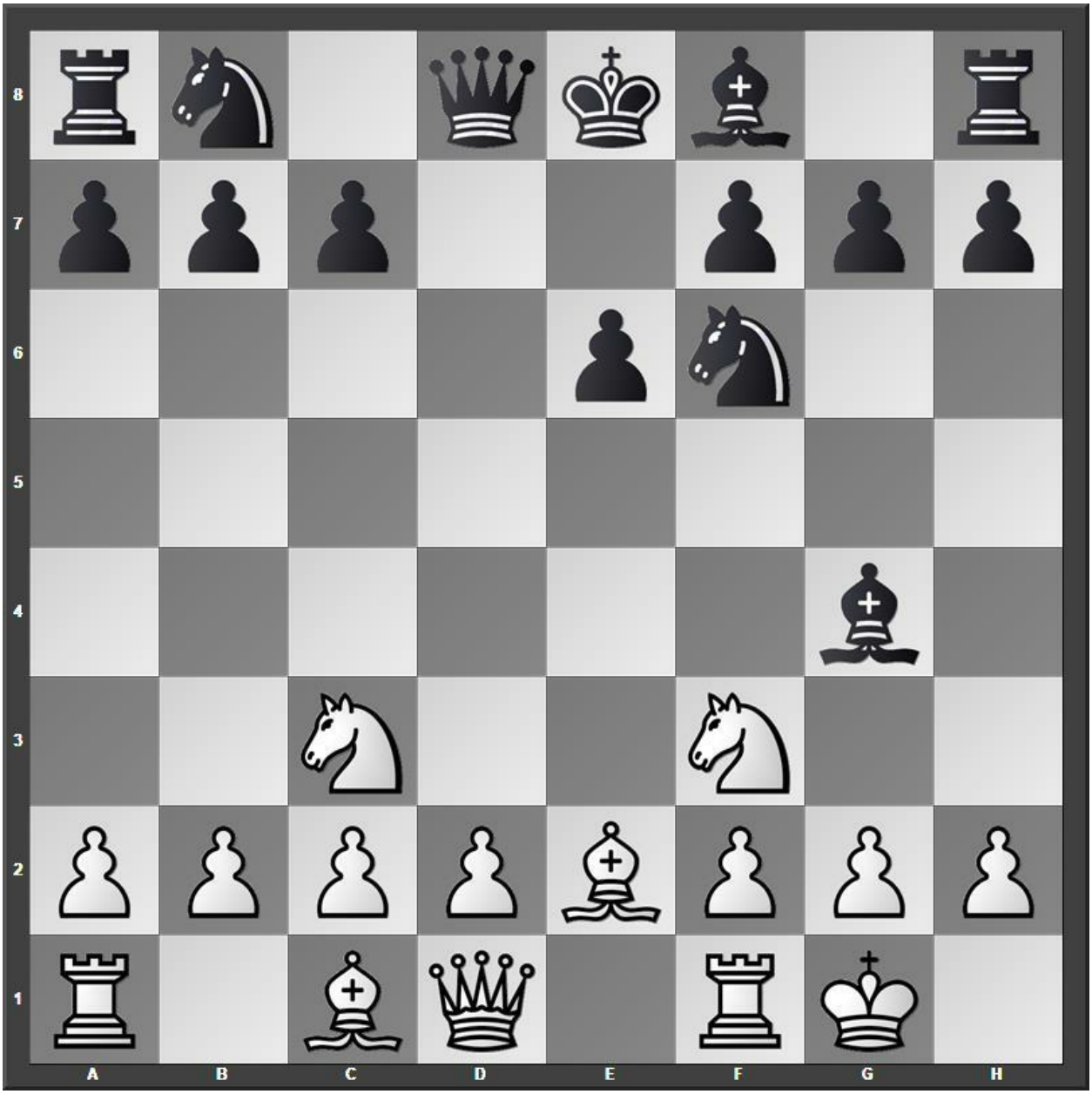
When we begin without sharp tactics, I use chess strategy.

**4.Be2 Qxd5**

Also playable is 4…Nxd5. See next game.

**5.0–0 e6**

**6.Nc3 Qd8**



**7.d4 c6**

Or 7...Nc6 8.Be3 Bd6 with chances for both sides.

**8.Ne5 Bxe2**

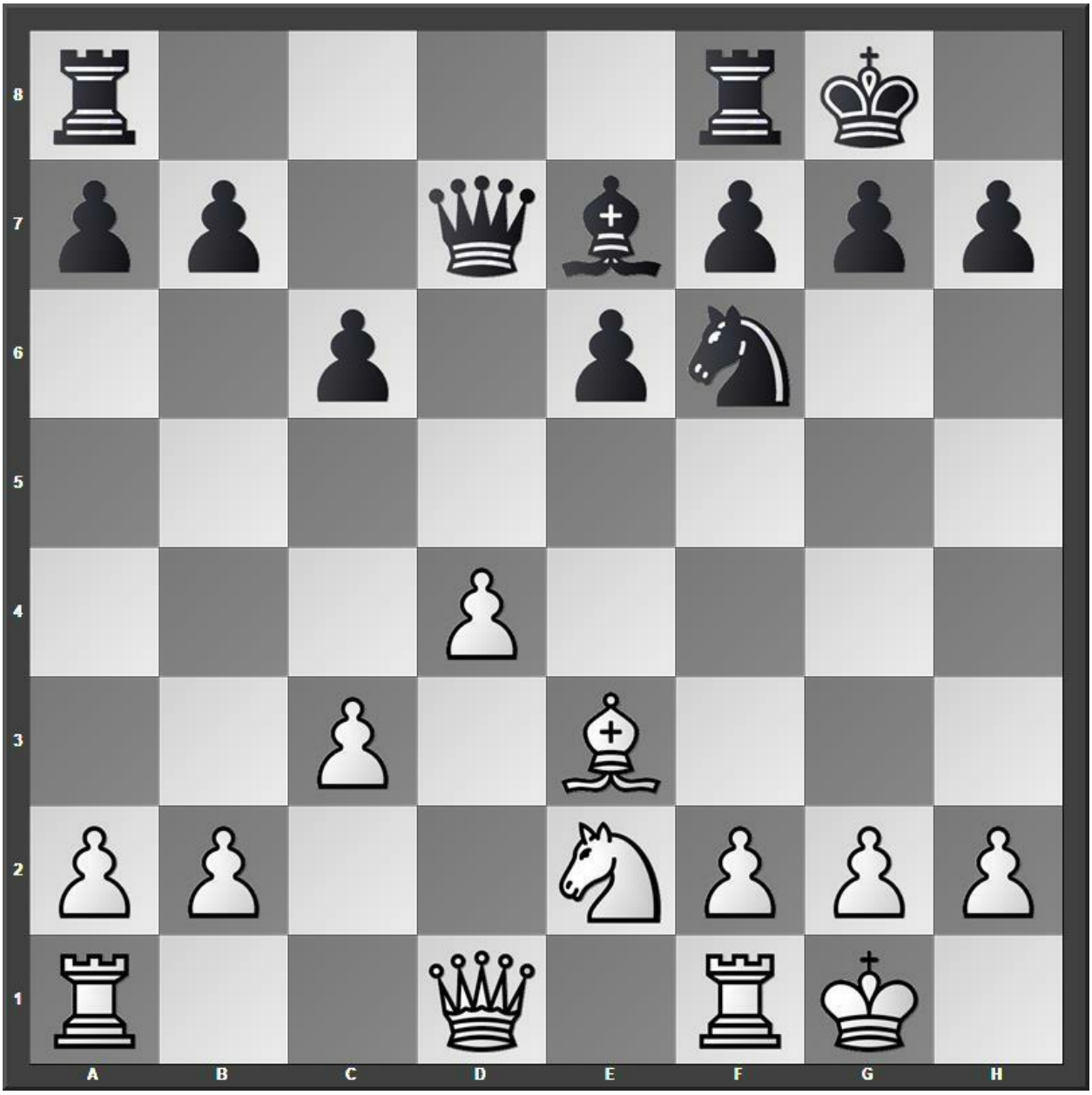
**9.Nxe2 Nbd7**

**10.Nxd7 Qxd7**

**11.c3 Be7**

Or 11...Bd6 12.Bf4 0–0 13.Be5 with equality.

**12.Be3 0–0**



**13.Qb3 b6**

**14.Rad1 Rfd8**

**15.Ng3 Rac8**

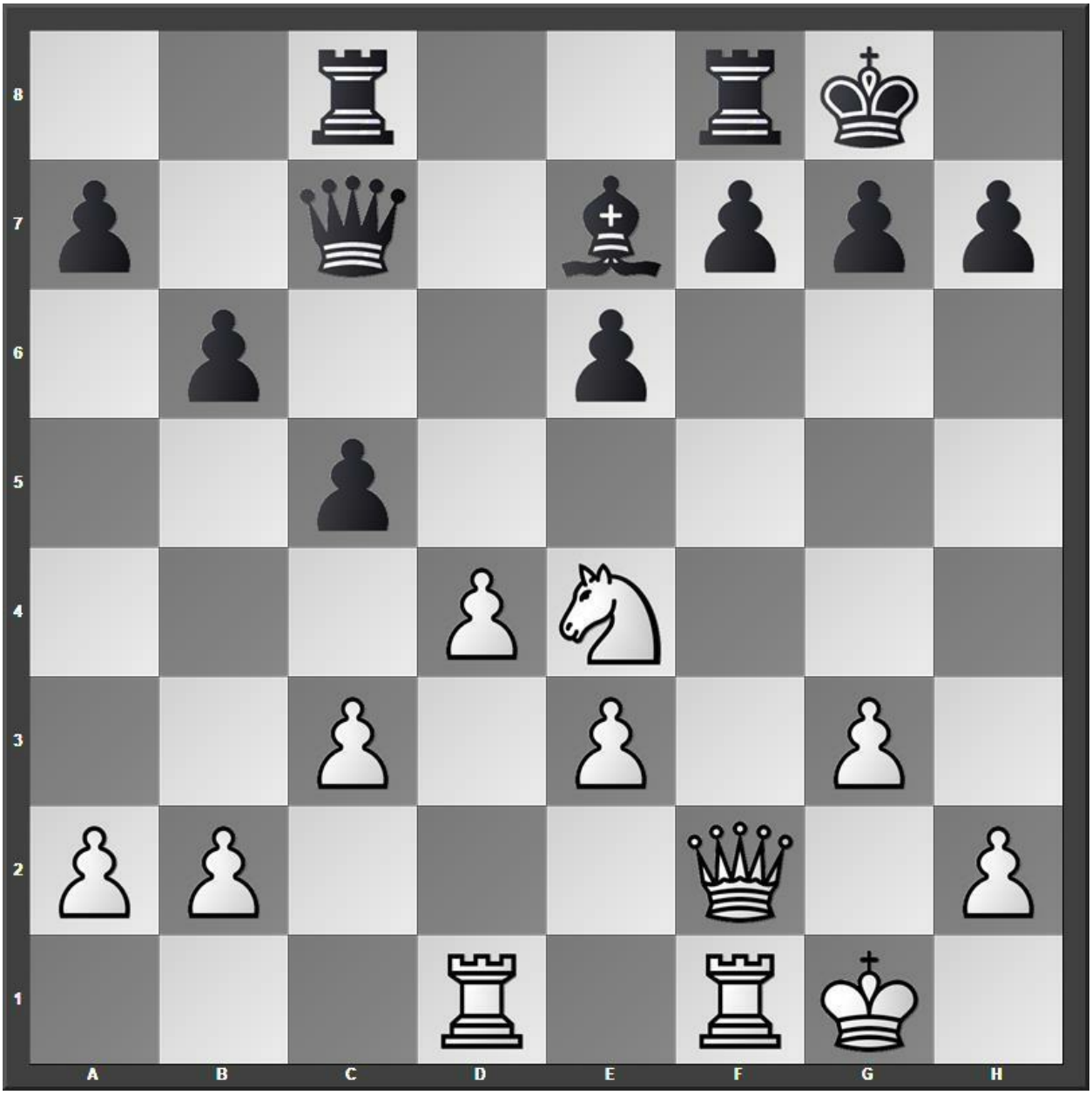
**16.Qc2 Qc7**

**17.Ne4 Ng4**

**18.g3 Nxe3**

**19.fxe3 c5**

**20.Qf2 Rf8**



Good choices are 21.dxc5 or 21.Qf4 with equal chances.

**21.Rd2 f5**

The knight has no safe moves. 22.Qg2 fxe4 wins a piece.

**22.dxc5 fxe4**

**23.cxb6 Rxf2**

**24.bxc7 0–1**

Black wins a rook.

White resigns

## Game 23 – B01 [2.exd5 Nf6 3.Nf3 Bg4]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 21.01.2022

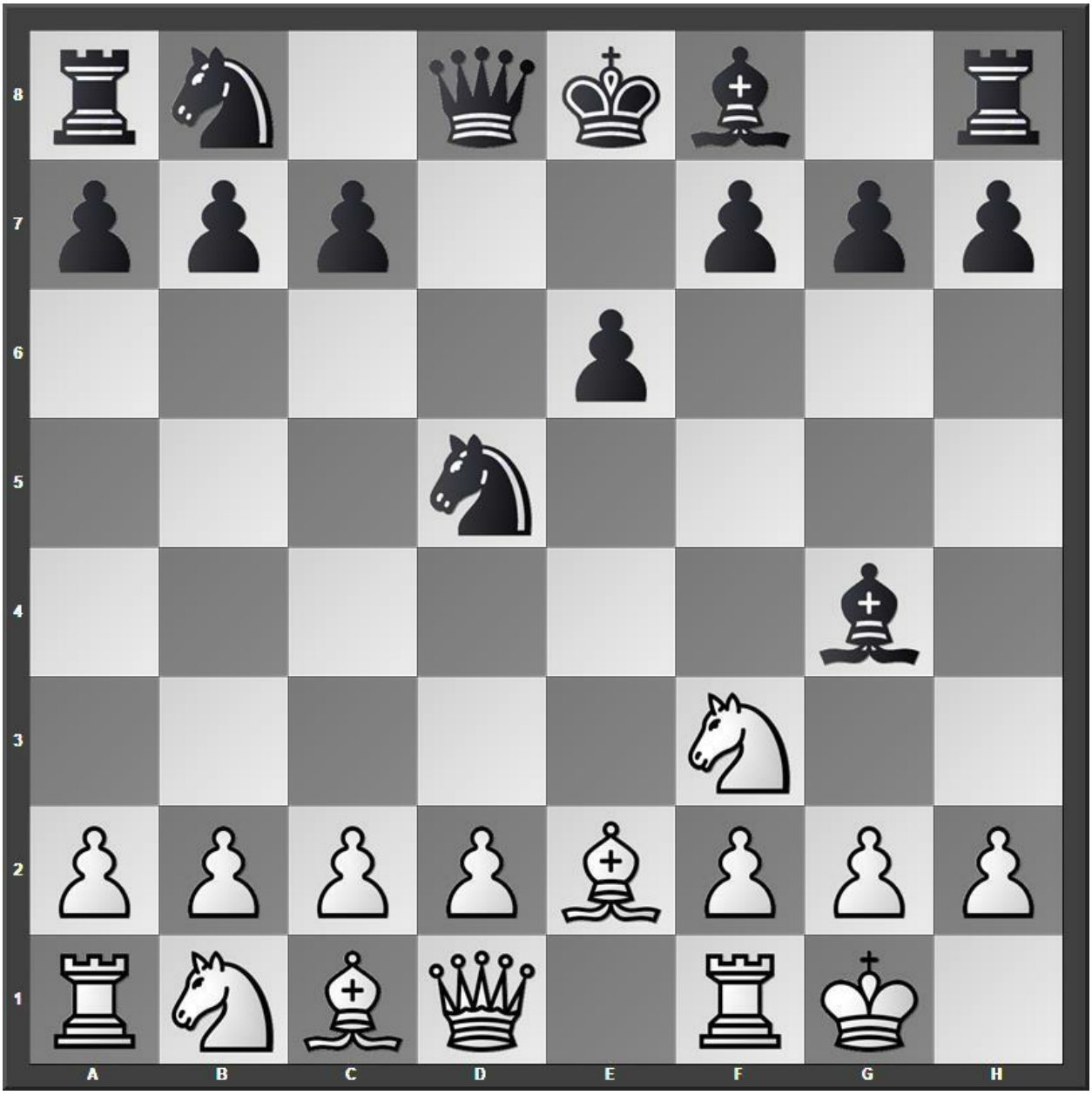
**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Nf6**

**3.Nf3 Bg4**

**4.Be2 Nxd5**

**5.0–0 e6**



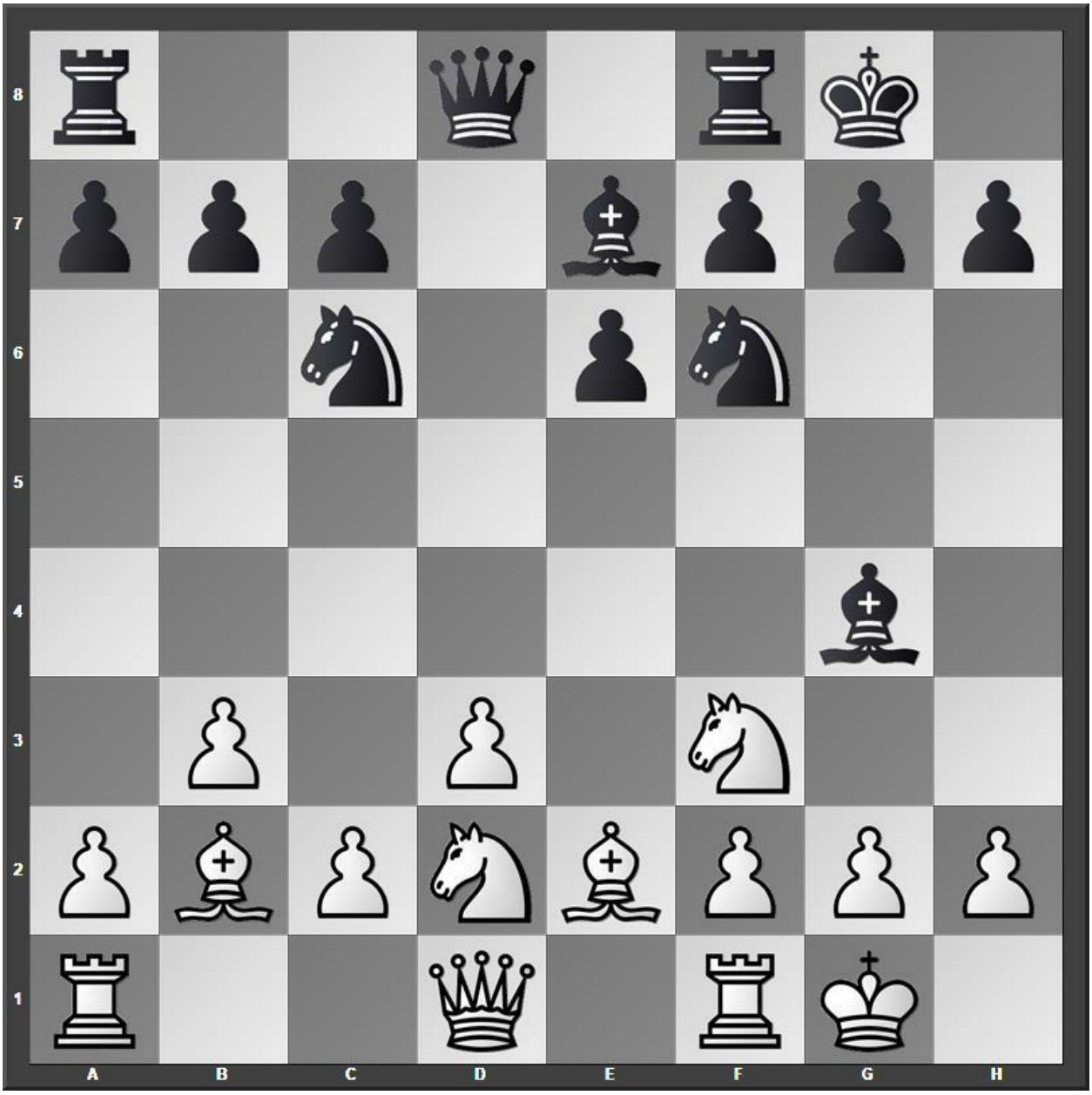
White could play 6.Re1 or 6.h3, better is to play something on the queenside. The best try for an advantage is 6.d4.

**6.b3 Nc6**

**7.Bb2 Nf6**

**8.d3 Be7**

**9.Nbd2 0–0**



White’s initial setup seems designed to swap pieces.

**10.Ne5 Nxe5**

**11.Bxe5 Bxe2**

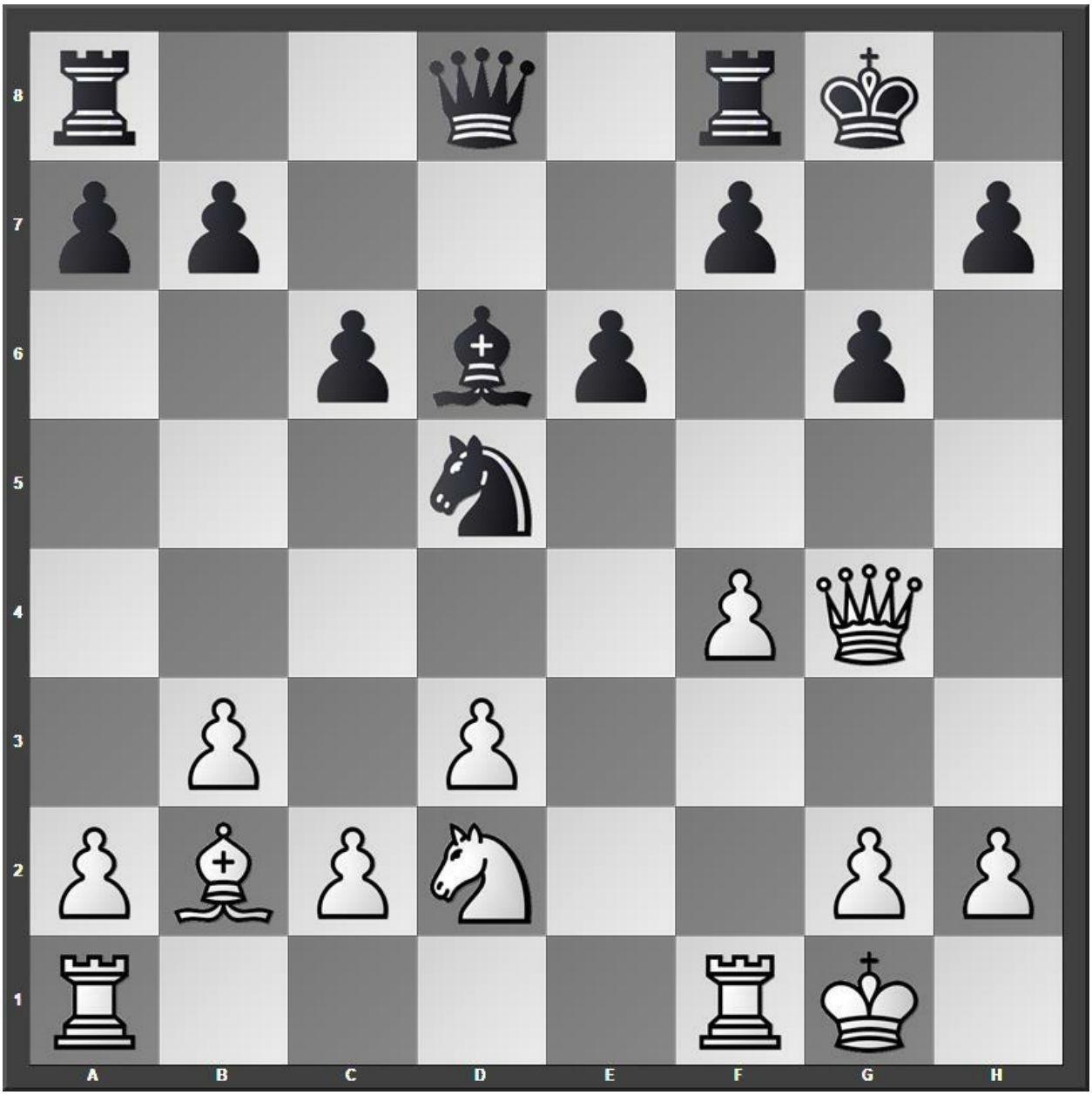
**12.Qxe2 c6**

**13.f4 Bd6**

**14.Bb2 Nd5**

**15.Qg4 g6**

White's attack comes to life. Black stops checkmate on g7.



White could try 16.Nc4 defending e3 and attacking d6.

**16.Ne4 Be7**

I blitzed my move. Then I realized 16...f5 was a pawn fork.

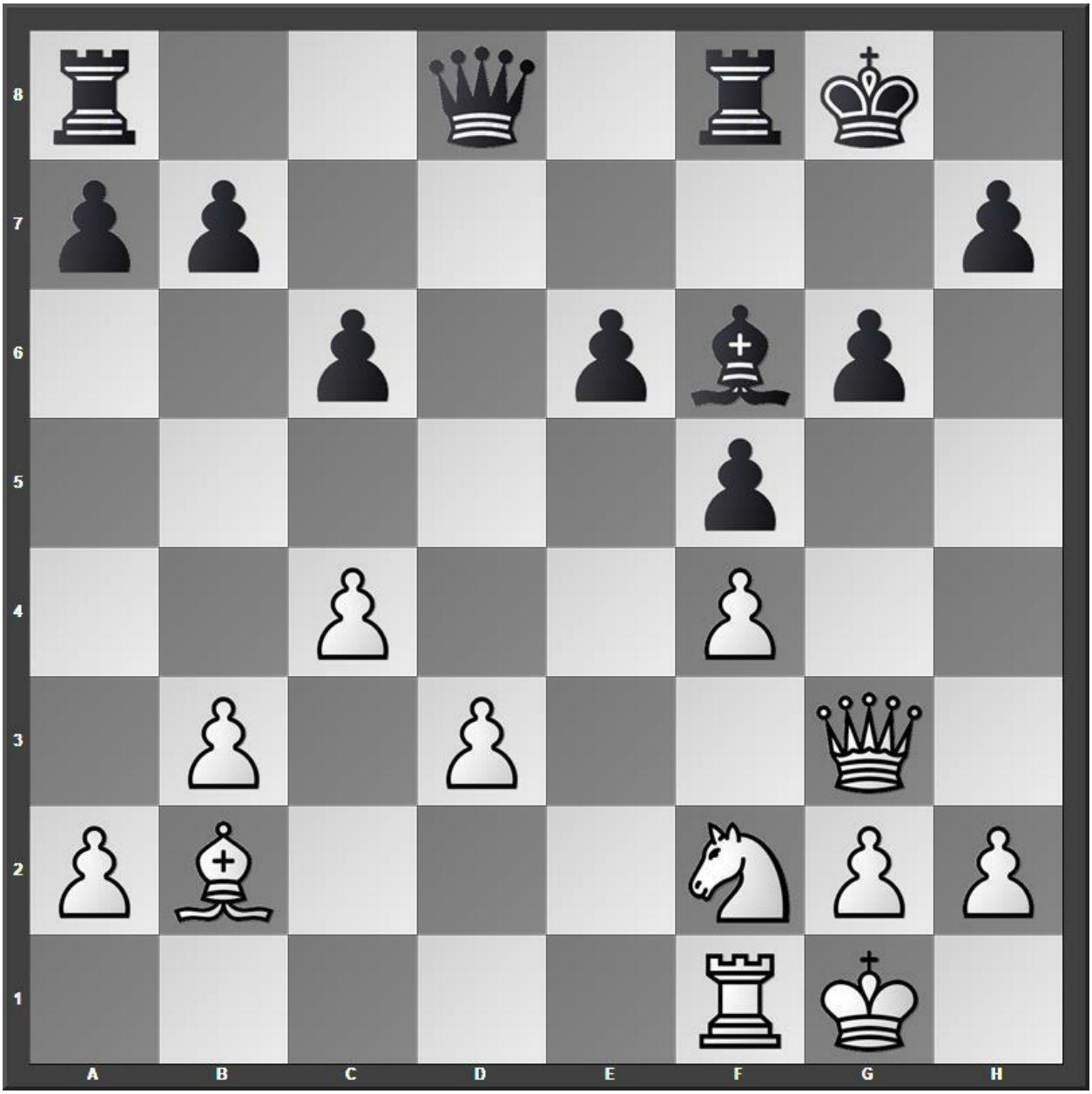
Good is 17.Qe2 Qb6+ 18.Kh1 f5 19.Nd2 Qe3 with chances for both sides. Instead, White loses the Exchange to a fork.

**17.c4 Ne3**

**18.Qg3 Nxf1**

**19.Rxf1 f5**

**20.Nf2 Bf6**



If 21.Bxf6 Qxf6 22.Re1 Qb2 23.Nh3 Rfe8 24.Ng5 Rad8.

**21.Bc1 Re8**

**22.h4 Qd7**

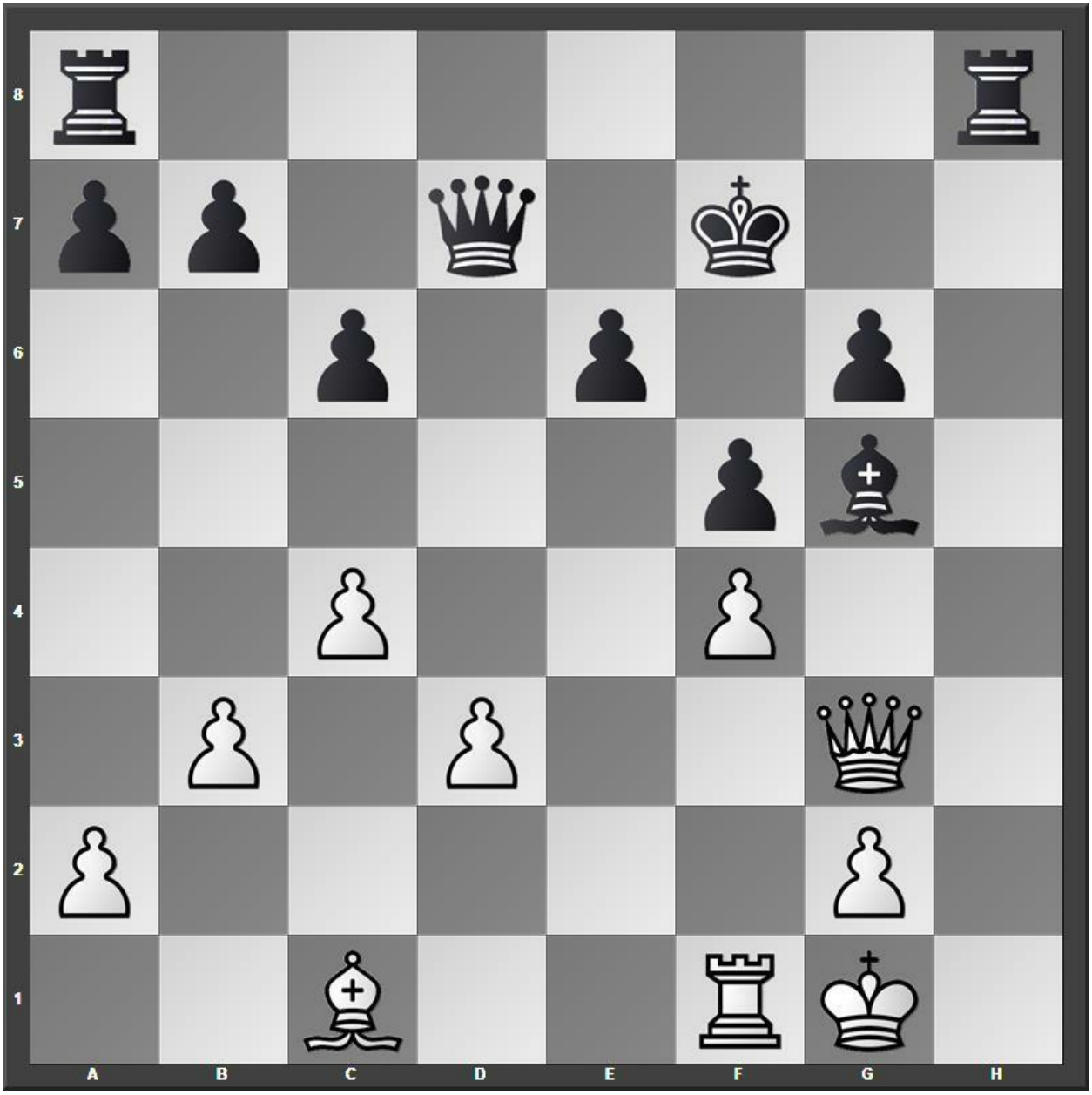
I missed 22...Bxh4 winning a pawn.

**23.h5 Kf7**

**24.hxg6+ hxg6**

**25.Nh3 Rh8**

**26.Ng5+ Bxg5**



If 27.fxg5 Rh5 28.Qe5 Kg8 29.Qf6 Qf7 and Black is better.

**27.Qxg5 Qd8**

I almost played 27...Qd4+ 28.Rf2 Rh7 to double rooks.

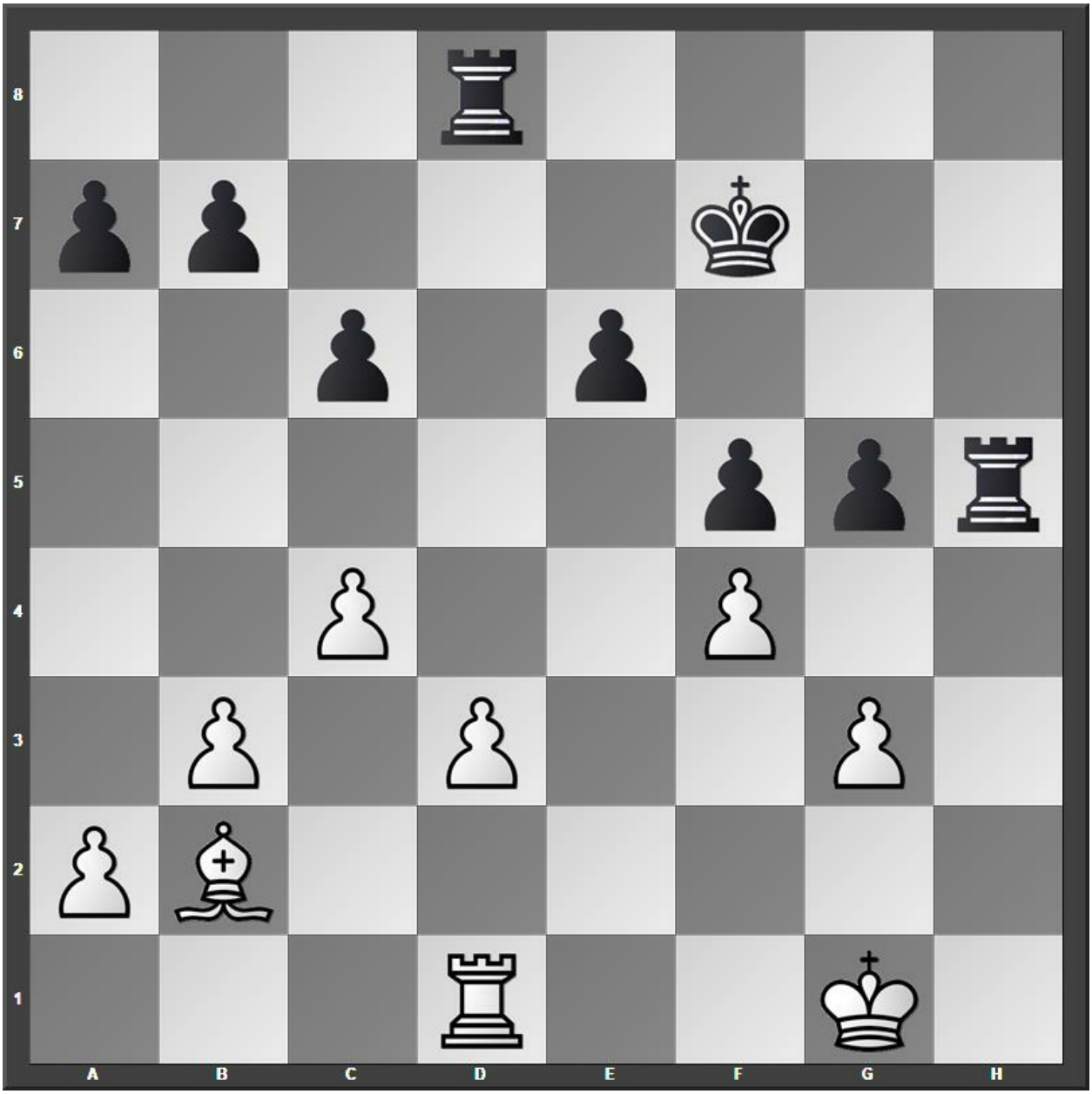
**28.Qg3 Qh4**

**29.Qxh4 Rxh4**

**30.g3 Rh5**

**31.Bb2 Rd8**

**32.Rd1 g5**

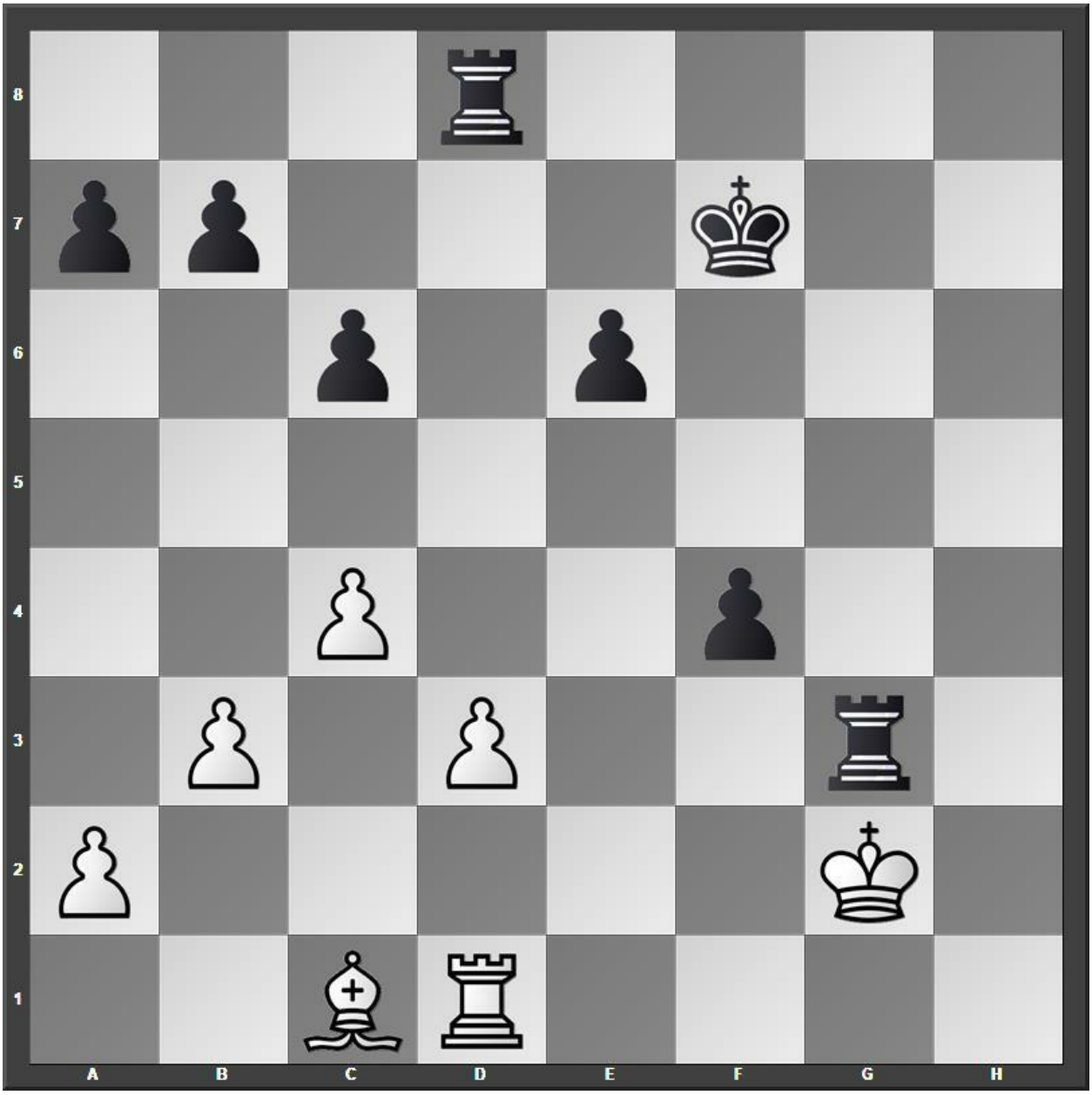


**33.fxg5 Rxg5**

**34.Kg2 f4**

**35.Bc1 Rxg3+**

Black is up the Exchange winning the endgame.



**36.Kf2 Rdxd3**

**37.Rxd3 Rxd3**

**38.Bxf4 Kf6**

**39.Ke2 Rd7**

**40.Ke3 Kf5**

**41.Bh6 Rh7**

**42.Bf4 Rh3+ 0–1**

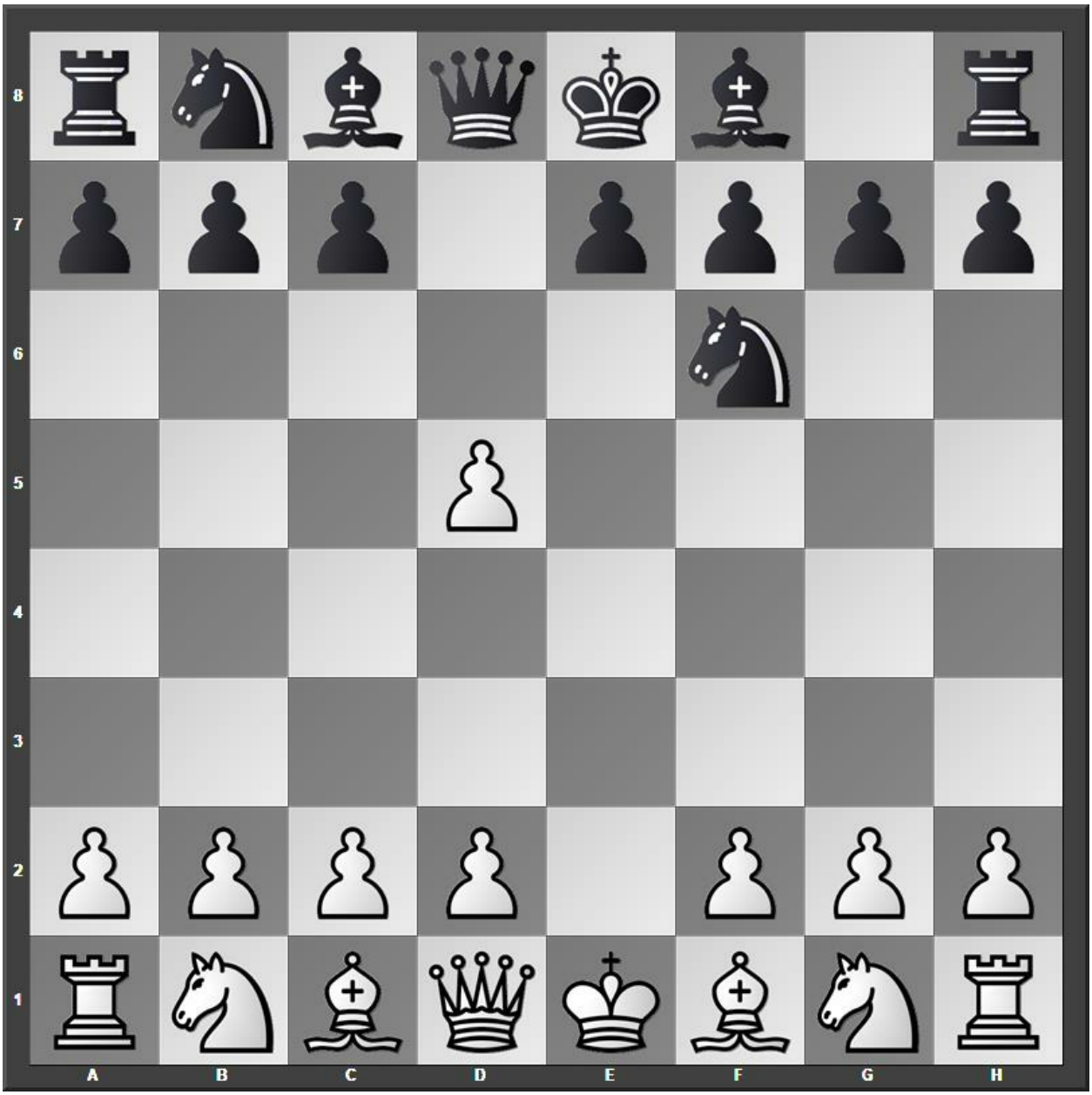
White resigns

# Game 24 – B01 [2.exd5 Nf6 3.d4]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 19.07.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Nf6**



Most players recapture d5 with the queen Black intends to take with the knight. If 3.c4 c6 4.d4 cxd5 is a Caro-Kann.

**3.d4 Nxd5**

**4.Nf3 Nc6**

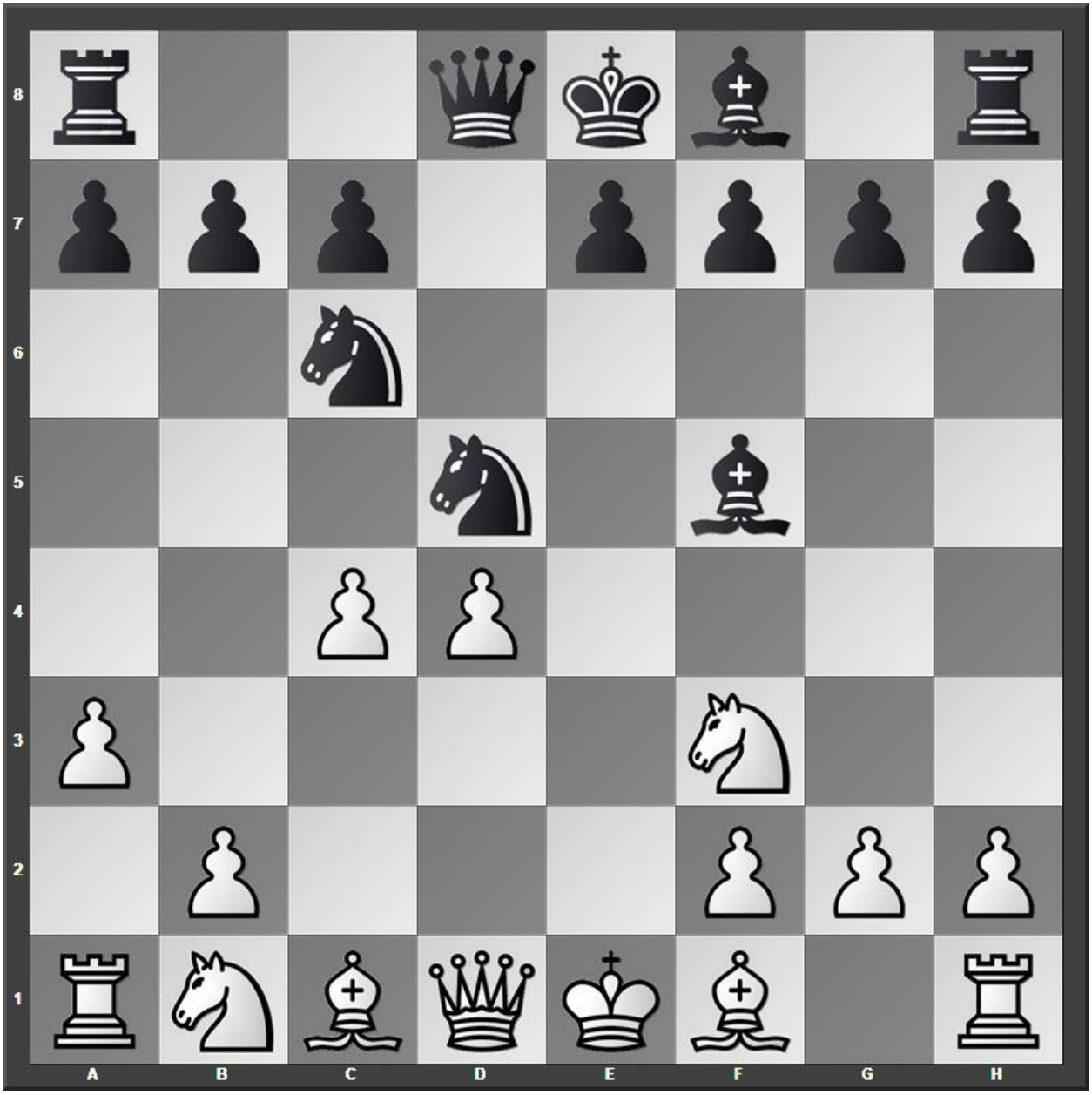
A safer piece move would be to move the bishop 4...Bg4.

**5.a3**

Weak. More active is 5.c4 Ndb4 6.d5 Bf5 7.Na3 e6 8.dxc6.

**5...Bf5**

**6.c4**



My opponent brought out three pieces to my one. I need to kick them with my pawns. Immediately Black goes wrong.

**6…Nf4**

The knight is en prise (a free prize). Better is 6...Nf6 7.d5.

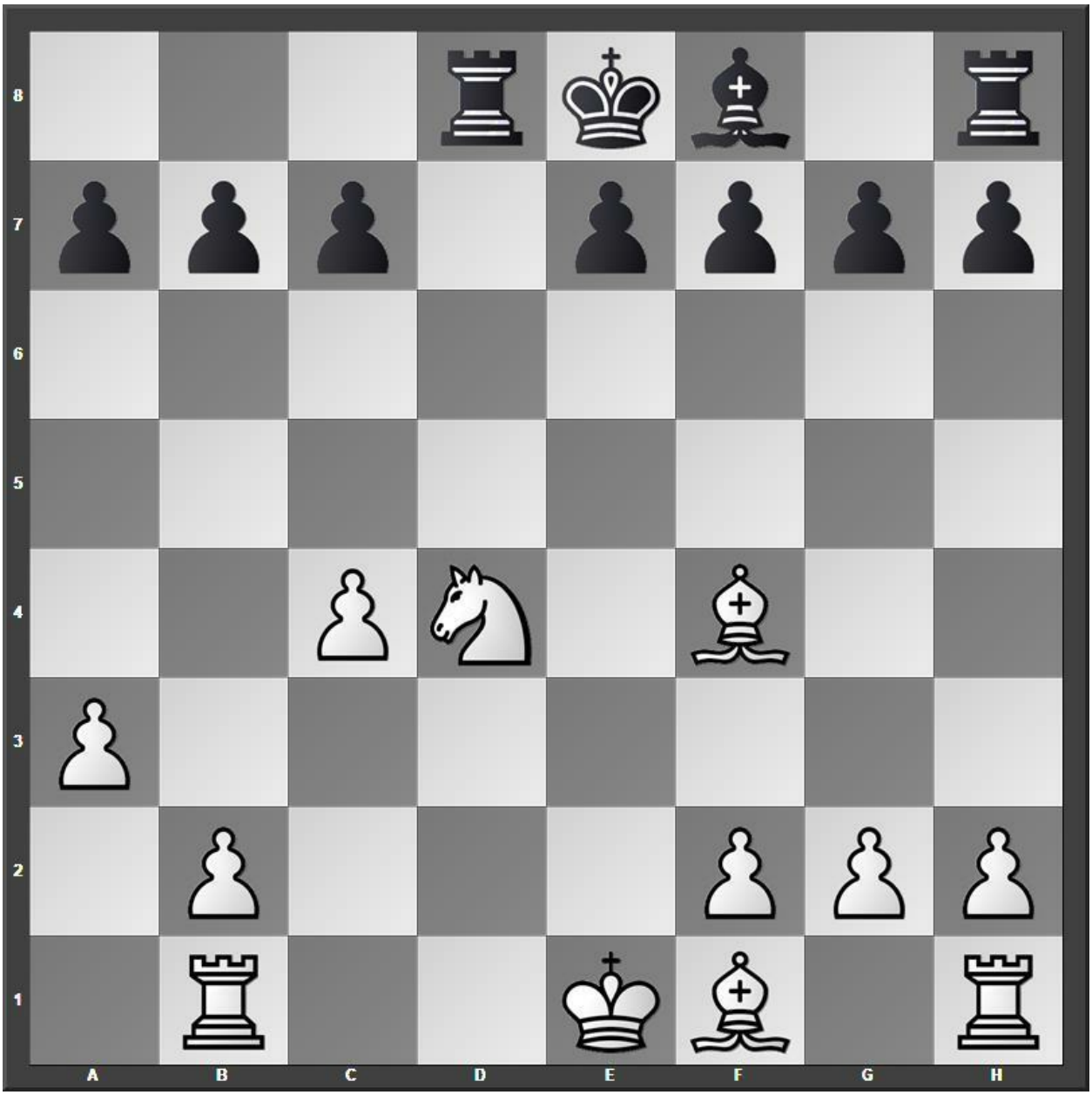
**7.Bxf4 Nxd4**

Black is on a roll with the offer of a second knight. Maybe it is a hot dog roll, since frankly both knights just get eaten.

**8.Qxd4 Qxd4**

**9.Nxd4 Bxb1**

**10.Rxb1 Rd8**




White is already up 2 pieces. This game will not last long.

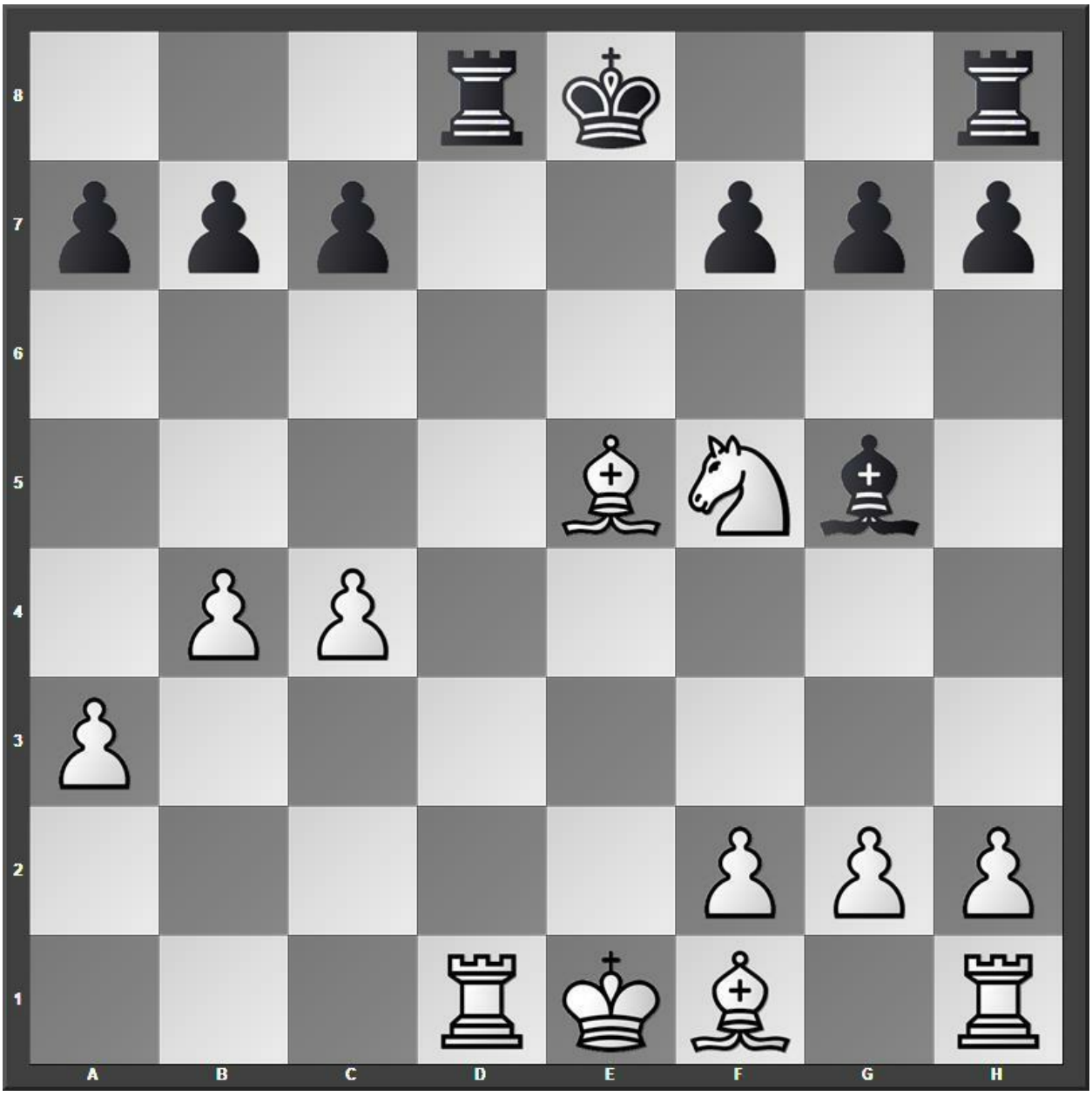
**11.Rd1 e5**

**12.Bxe5 Bc5**

**13.b4 Be7**

**14.Nf5 Bg5**

If 14...Bf6 15.Bxc7.



**15.Rxd8+**

I thought 15.Nxg7+ Ke7 but I missed 16.Nf5+ Ke6 17.Bxh8 and White wins material.

**15...Kxd8**

**16.f4 Bh4+**

**17.Nxh4 1–0**

Black resigns

# Chapter 5 – Scandinavian 2.exd5 Qxd5

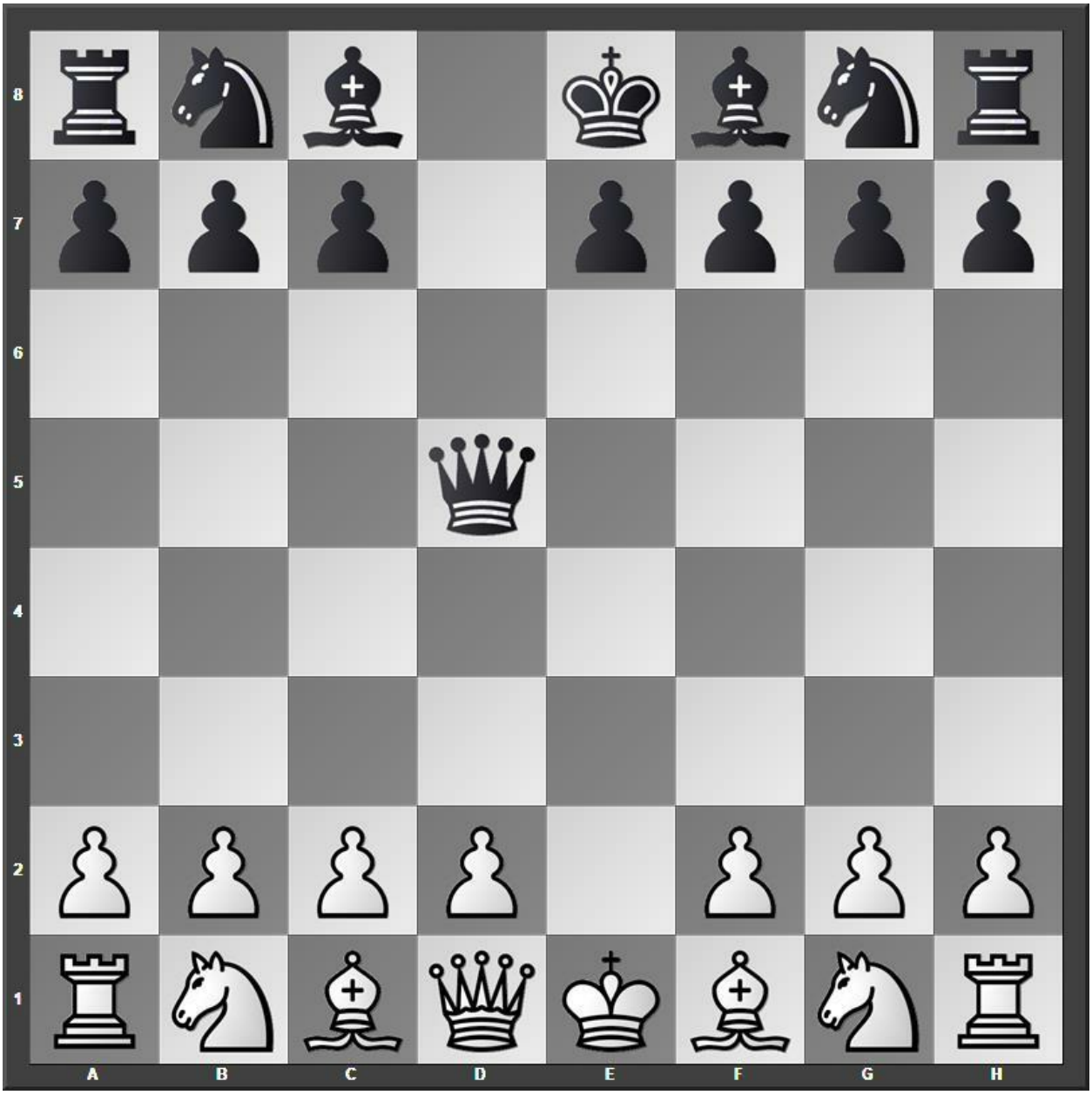
## Game 25 – B01 [2.exd5 Qxd5]

Sawyer – Guest, chess.com 04.06.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

The queen becomes a target for White’s knight. Black’s queen must get out of the way, but where will she go?

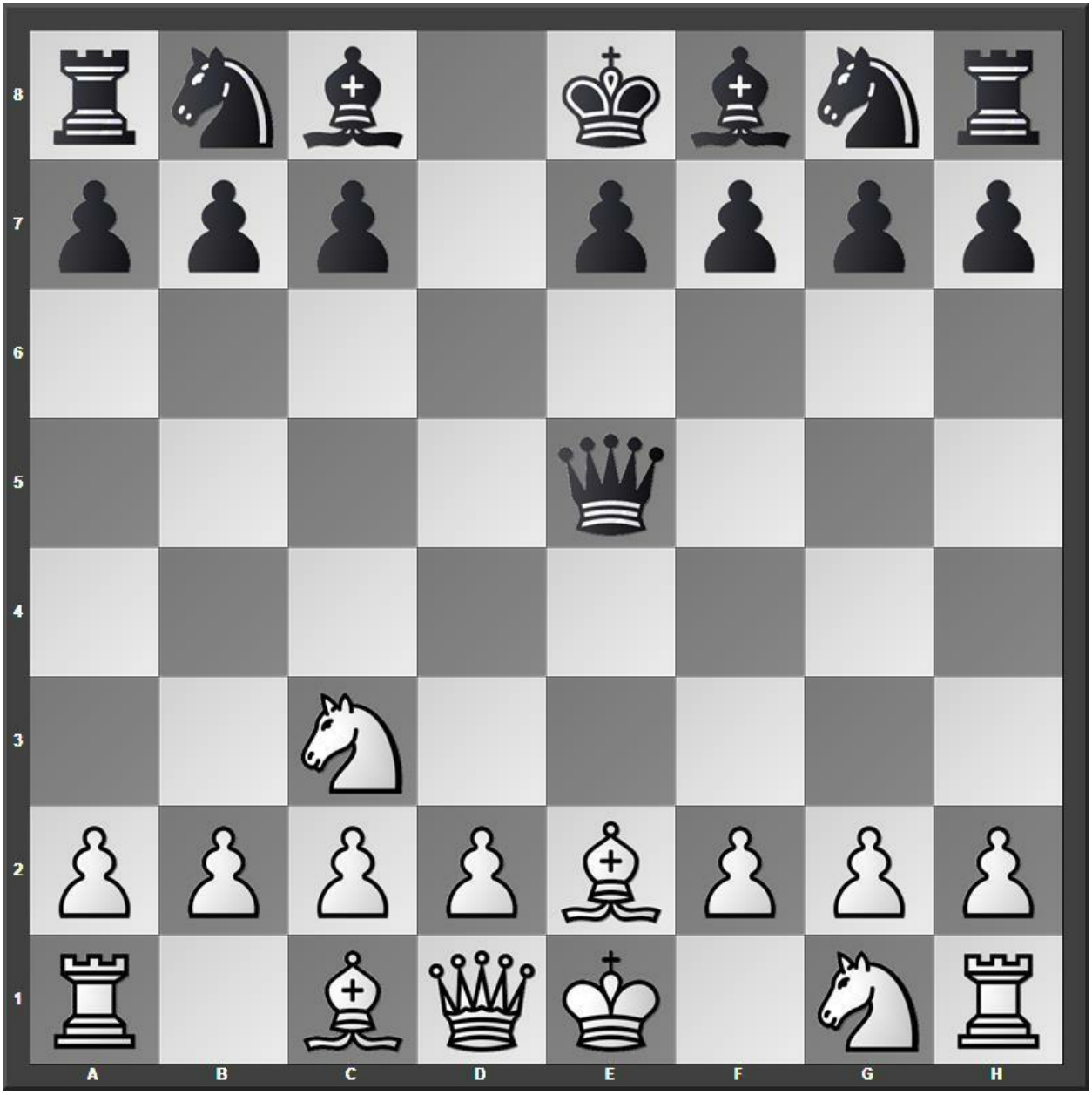


**3.Nc3 Qe5+**

Black checks. It is better to play 3…Qd6 or 3...Qa5.

**4.Be2**

The fastest way to for White to castle. Soon the Black queen will become a target to moves like Nf3 or d4. Such moves help White to gain time for an attack before Black is ready to defend. Black needs to move a minor piece.

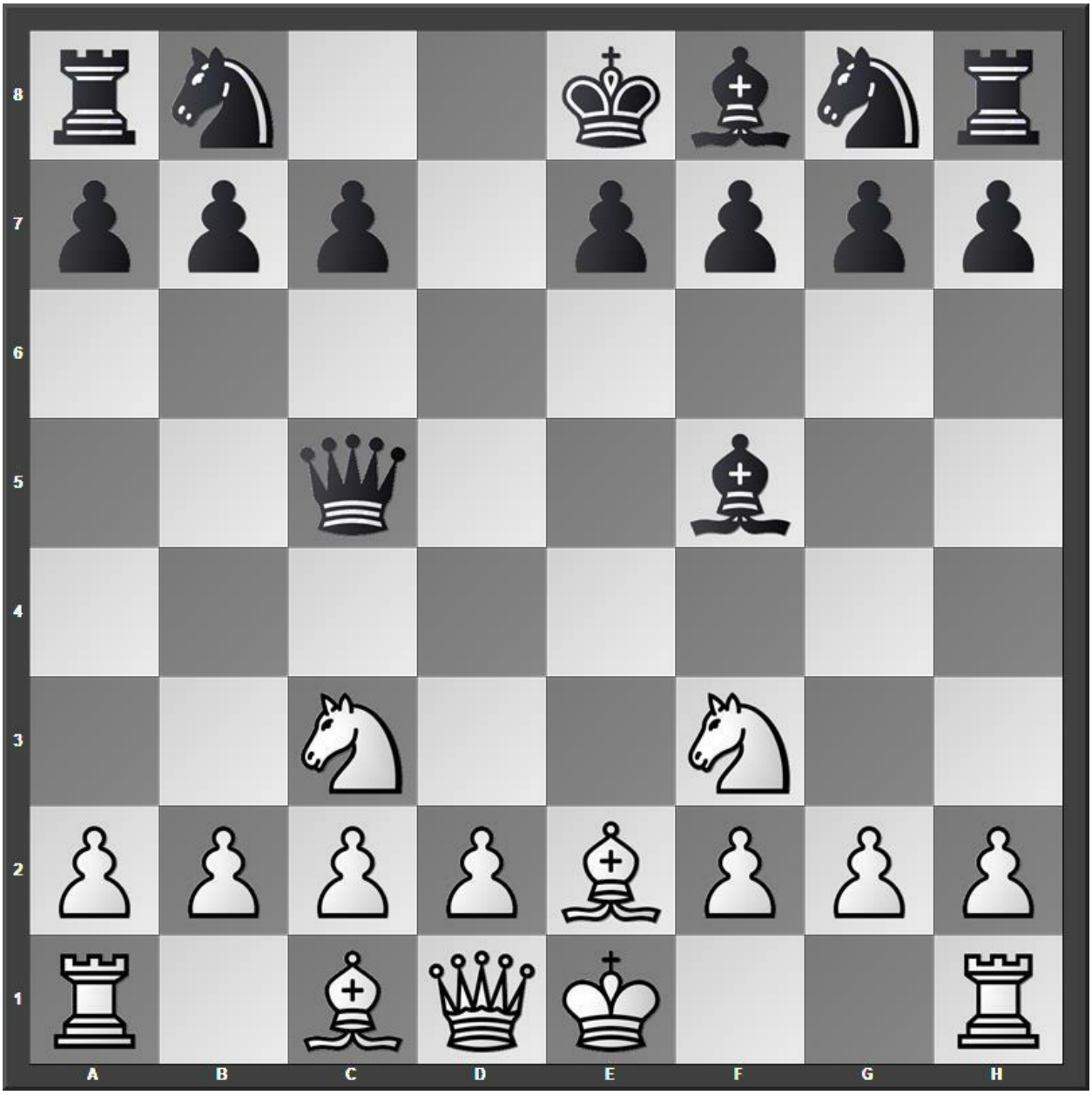


**4...Bf5**

Black develops a bishop. While good, the bishop doesn't really do anything except allow Black to castle queenside more quickly. Nothing has moved on Black's kingside. My second knight gains a tempo by attacking the queen.

**5.Nf3 Qc5**

The Black queen become a target for White's d-pawn.



**6.d4 Qb4**

The queen attacks b2 forcing my c1 bishop to defend it.

I kick the queen again just to clarify her new location.

**7.a3 Qa5**

Black has played 5 of the first 7 moves with the queen.

**8.0–0 e5**

Black gambits the e-pawn to speed up development.

**9.Re1 exd4**

I turn down the e5 pawn to set a mating combination trap.

Black falls for my trap. If 9...e4 10.Ne5 White stands better.

**10.Bb5+ Kd8**

Double check forces mate in 2. Black has one legal move.

**11.Re8# 1–0**

What a beautiful finish. I love short tactical wins like this.

Black is checkmated

# Game 26 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qe5+]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 29.07.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qe5+**

**4.Be2 Bf5**

Eight weeks after my previous game I played this one.

**5.d4 Qf6**

**6.Nf3 Nc6**

**7.a3 e5**

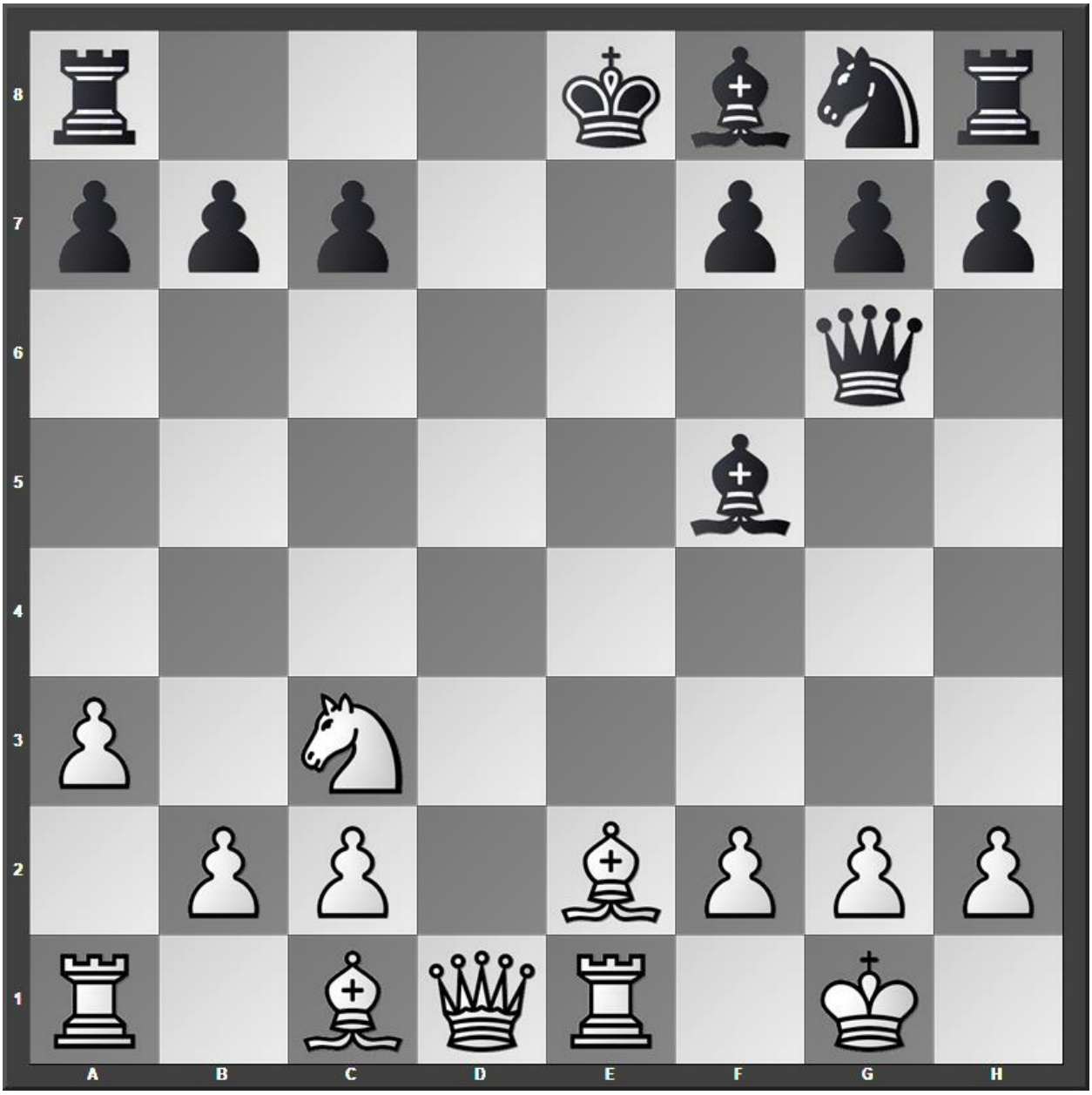
**8.dxe5 Nxe5**

**9.Nxe5 Qxe5**

Now I hurry to attack Black’s queen and king on the e-file.

**10.0–0 Qf6**

**11.Re1 Qg6**



**12.Bb5# 1–0**

Black is checkmated

# Game 27 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qe6+]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 20.06.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qe6+**

Black's queen blocks e7 and forces me to develop a piece.

**4.Be2 Bd7**

**5.Nf3 Qg4**

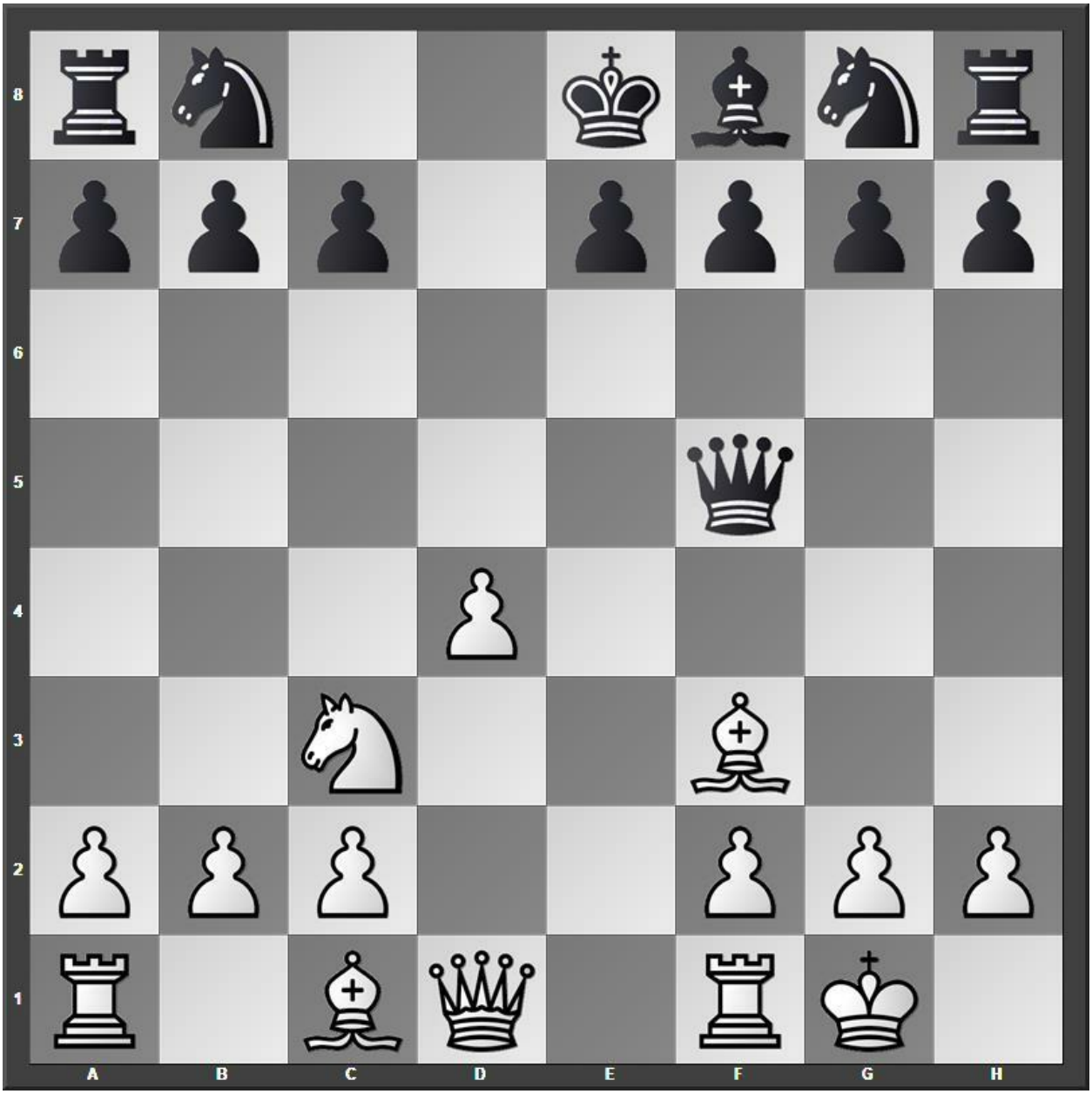
Moving the queen a third time attacks the g2 pawn.

**6.0–0 Bc6**

**7.d4 Bxf3**

**8.Bxf3 Qf5**

Consistent play but here Black missed my threat to b7.



**9.Bxb7 c6**

**10.Bxa8 Nf6**

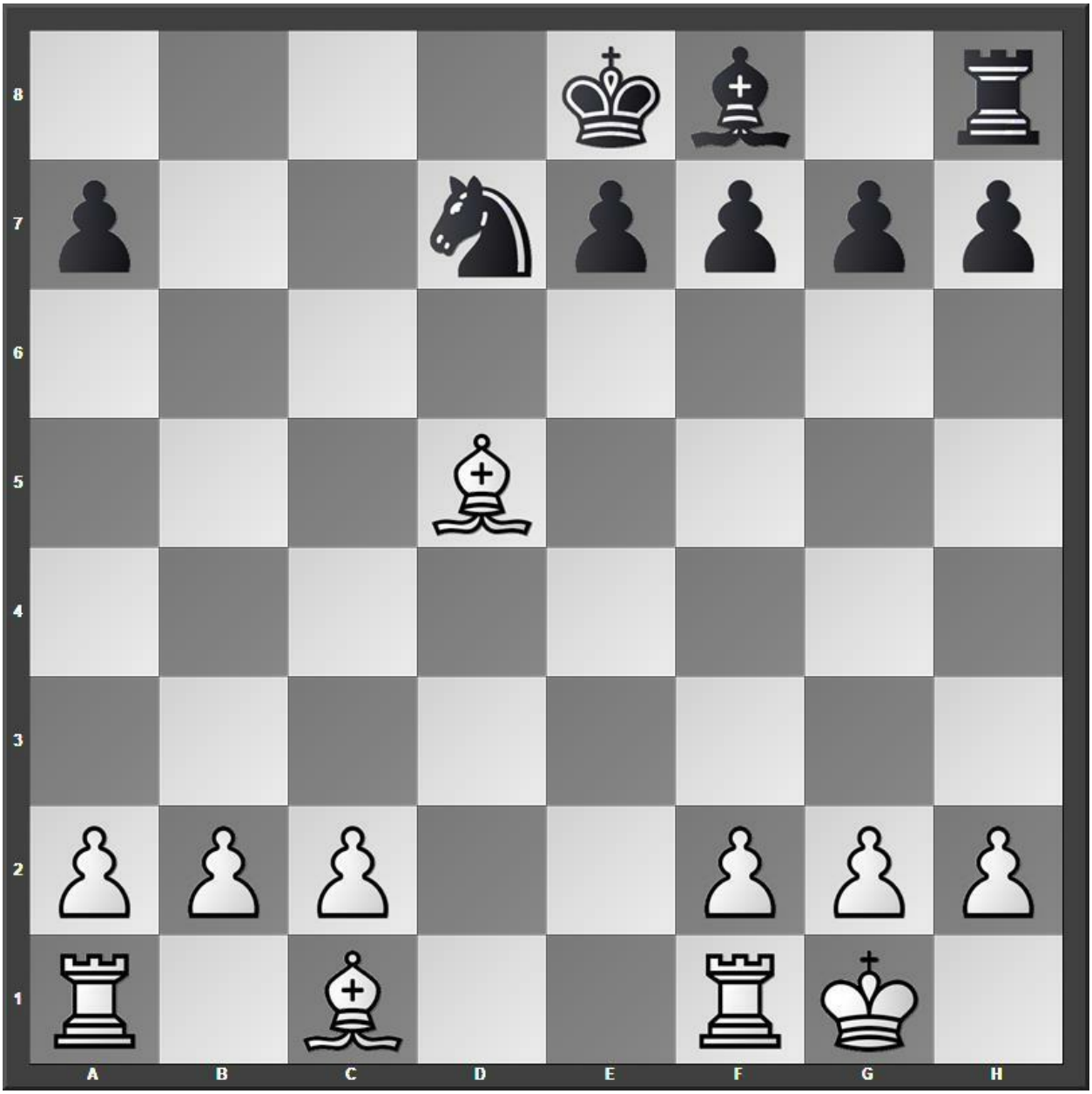
My strategy it to open lines to use my extra material.

**11.d5 Nxd5**

**12.Nxd5 Qxd5**

**13.Qxd5 cxd5**

**14.Bxd5 Nd7**



**15.Bc6 Kd8**

White wins more material by the tactical use of a pin.

**16.Rd1 Kc7**

**17.Bxd7 e6**

**18.Bf4+ Kb6**

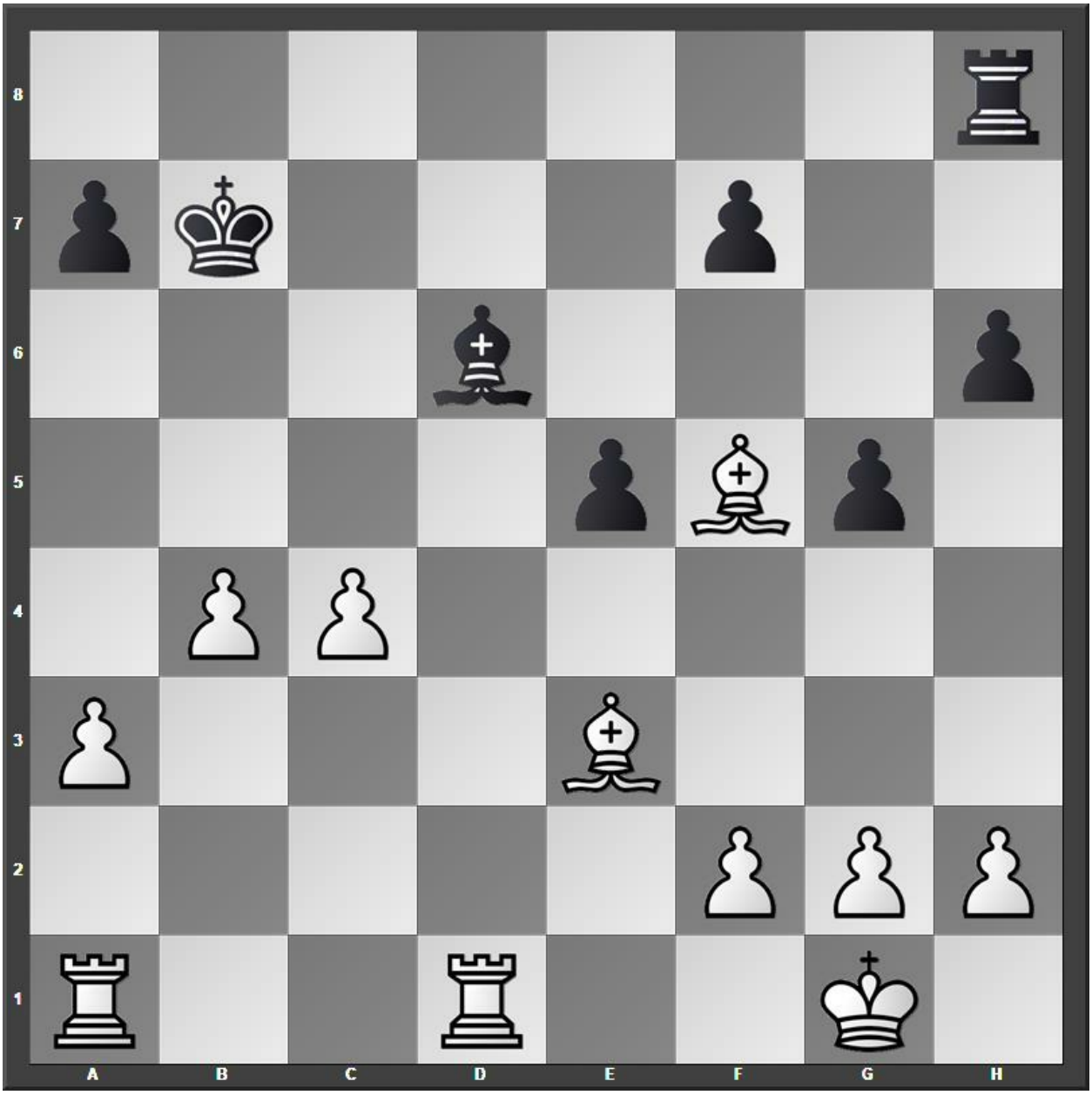
**19.a3 h6**

**20.b4 g5**

**21.Be3+ Kb7**

**22.c4 e5**

**23.Bf5 Bd6 1–0**



My opponent realized my rook could take the free bishop.

Black resigns

# Game 28 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qd8]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 21.08.2021

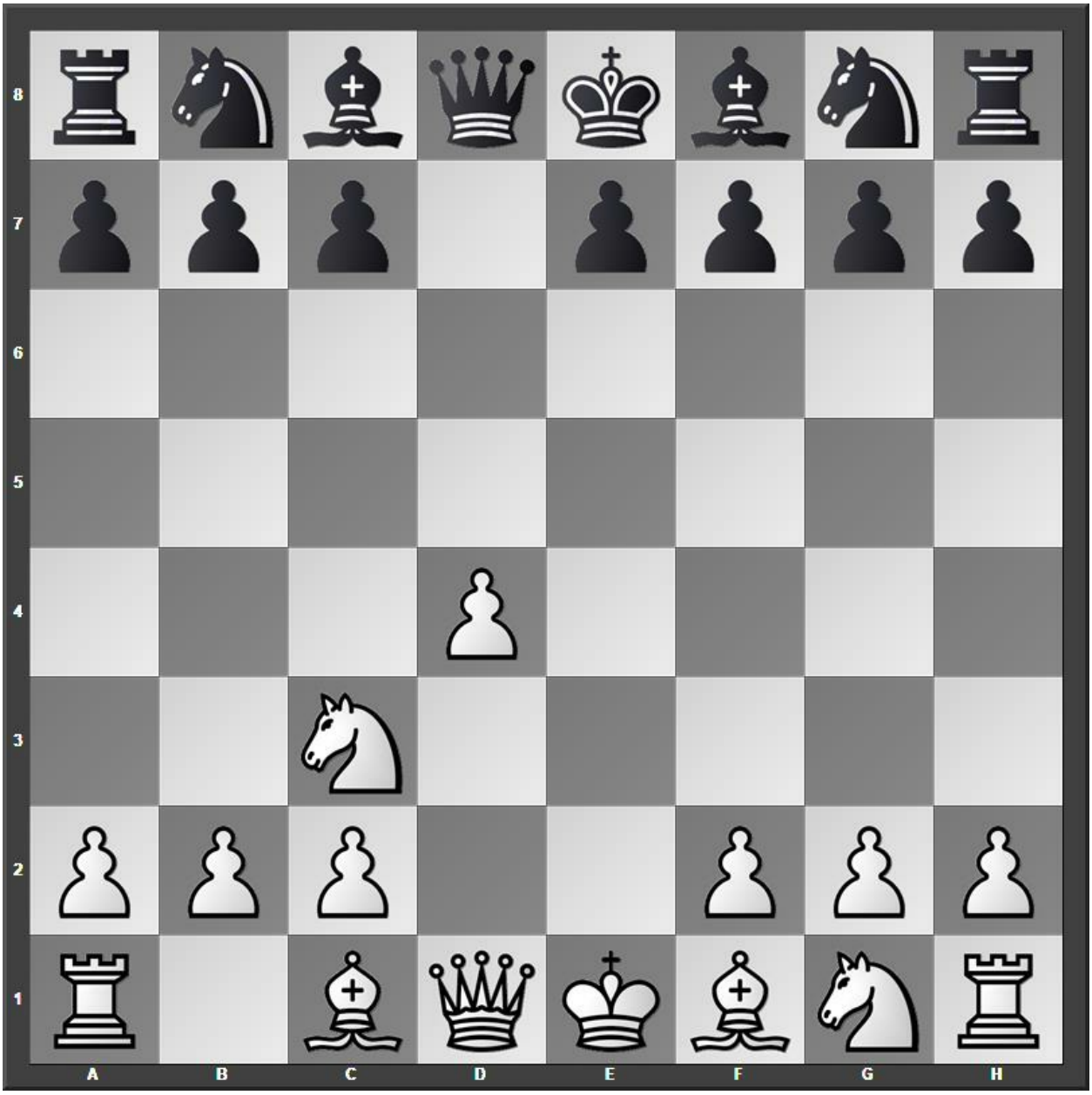
**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qd8**

Retreating the queen to the original square gives White a significant development lead. It’s hard to recover from that.

**4.d4**



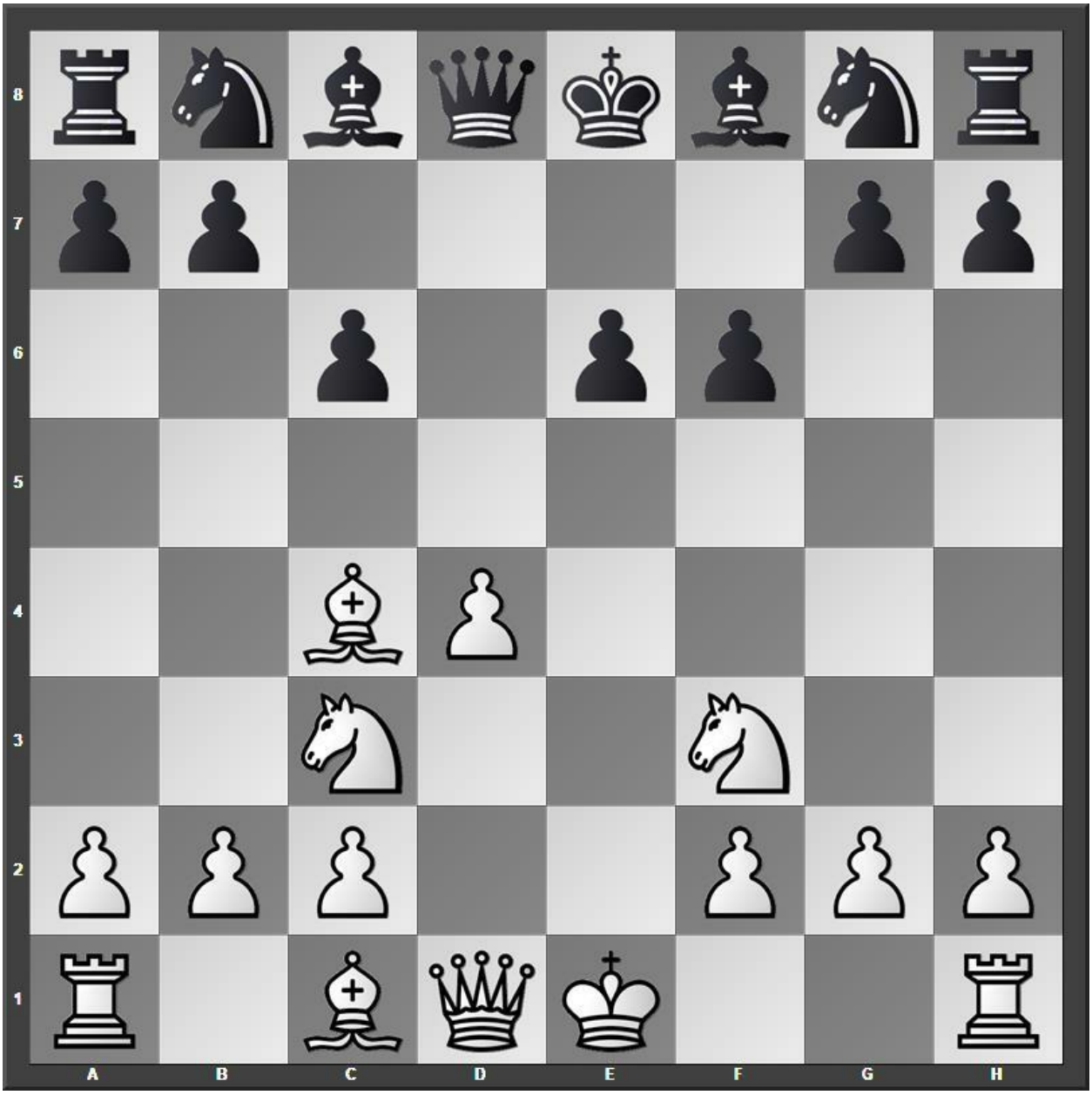
**4…c6**

More common is 4...Nf6 5.Nf3 when White has a slight opening edge in space and time.

**5.Nf3 f6**

This prevents 6.Ne5, but a wiser choice for Black is 5...Nf6. After 5…f6, an excellent possibility for White is 6.Bd3.

**6.Bc4 e6**



**7.0–0 Bb4**

A reasonable try is 7...Ne7 8.Re1 Nd5 and White is better.

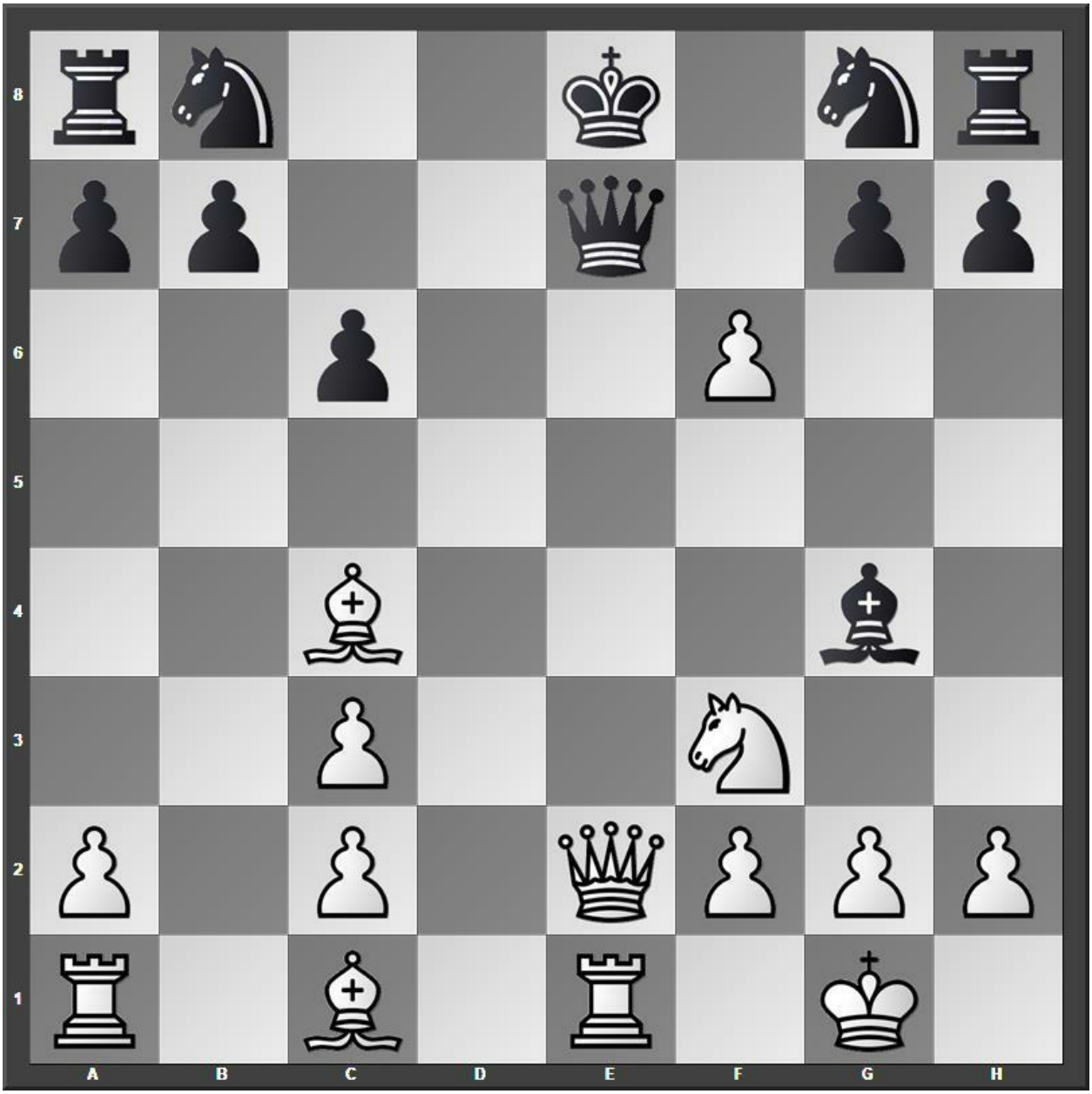
**8.Re1 Qe7**

**9.Qe2 Bxc3**

**10.bxc3 e5**

**11.dxe5 Bg4**

**12.exf6**



**12…Qxe2**

If 12...gxf6 13.Qd3 Bxf3 14.Ba3 and White wins the queen.

**13.Rxe2+ 1–0**

Black resigns

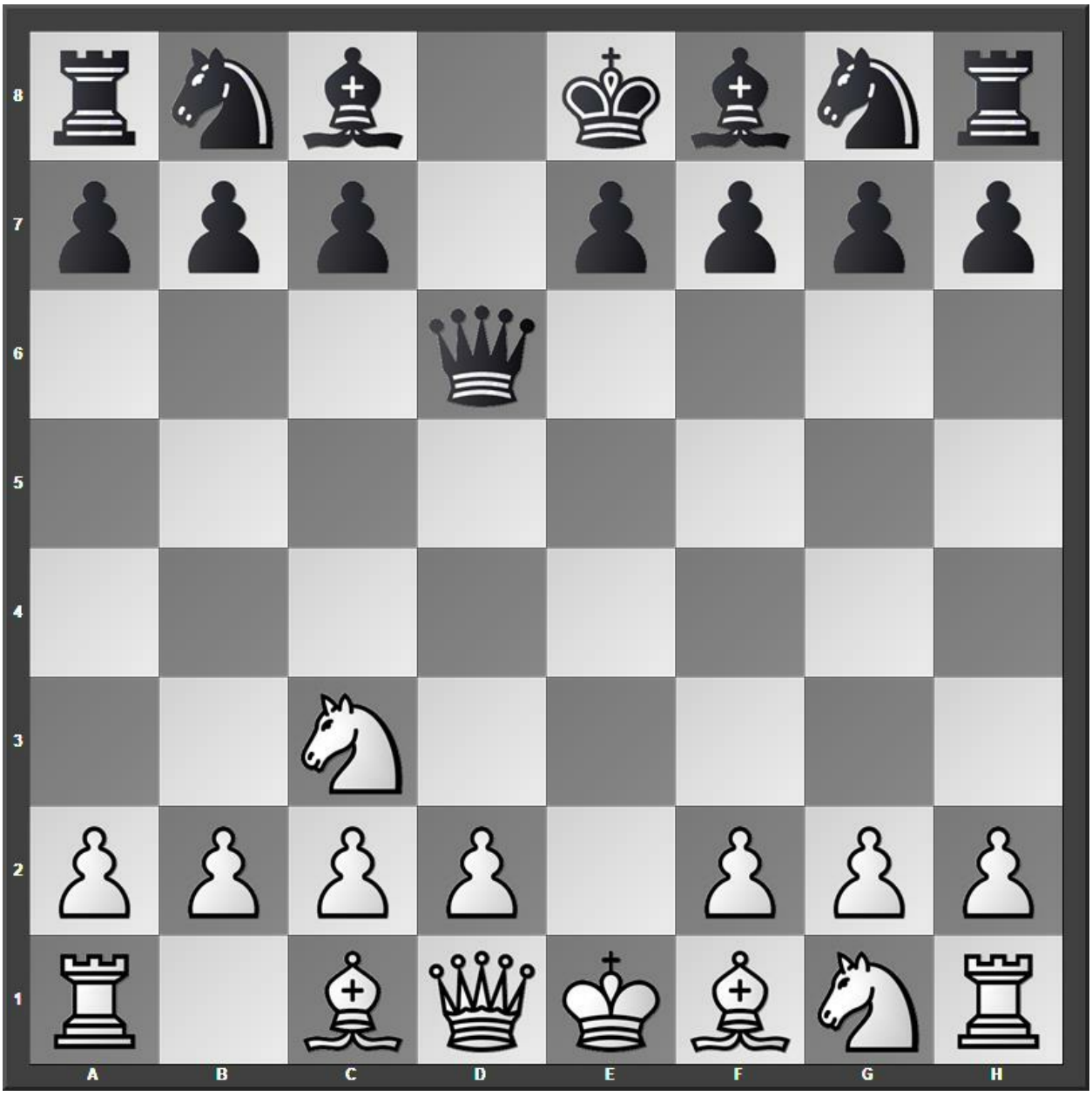
# Game 29 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qd6 4.d4 h5]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 01.07.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qd6**



This Gubinsky-Melts Variation has gaining in popularity during the past 20

years. Black’s queen maintains more influence on the center, usually without becoming a target.

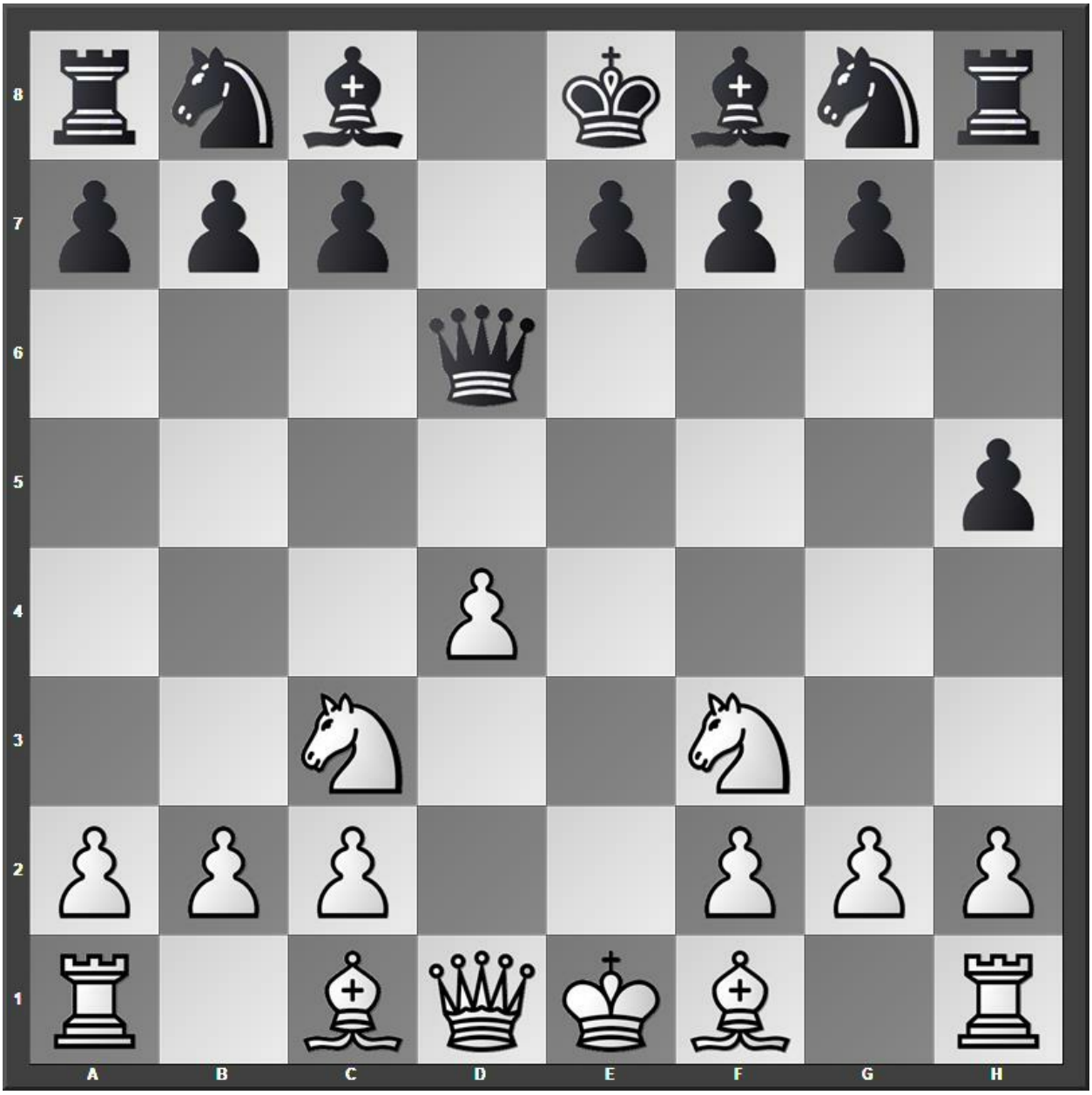
**4.d4**

I push my center pawns to grab space. It helps me develop all four of my minor pieces. The first player to activate both knights and both bishops usually has a huge advantage.

**4…h5**

In the race to develop all four minor pieces to active squares, this move is a waste of time. It might prove useful if White plays g3, but right now 4…h5 threatens nothing.

**5.Nf3**



White has two knights out. Black has none, so far. White moved both center pawns. Black has moved one. White has a slight but clear early advantage.

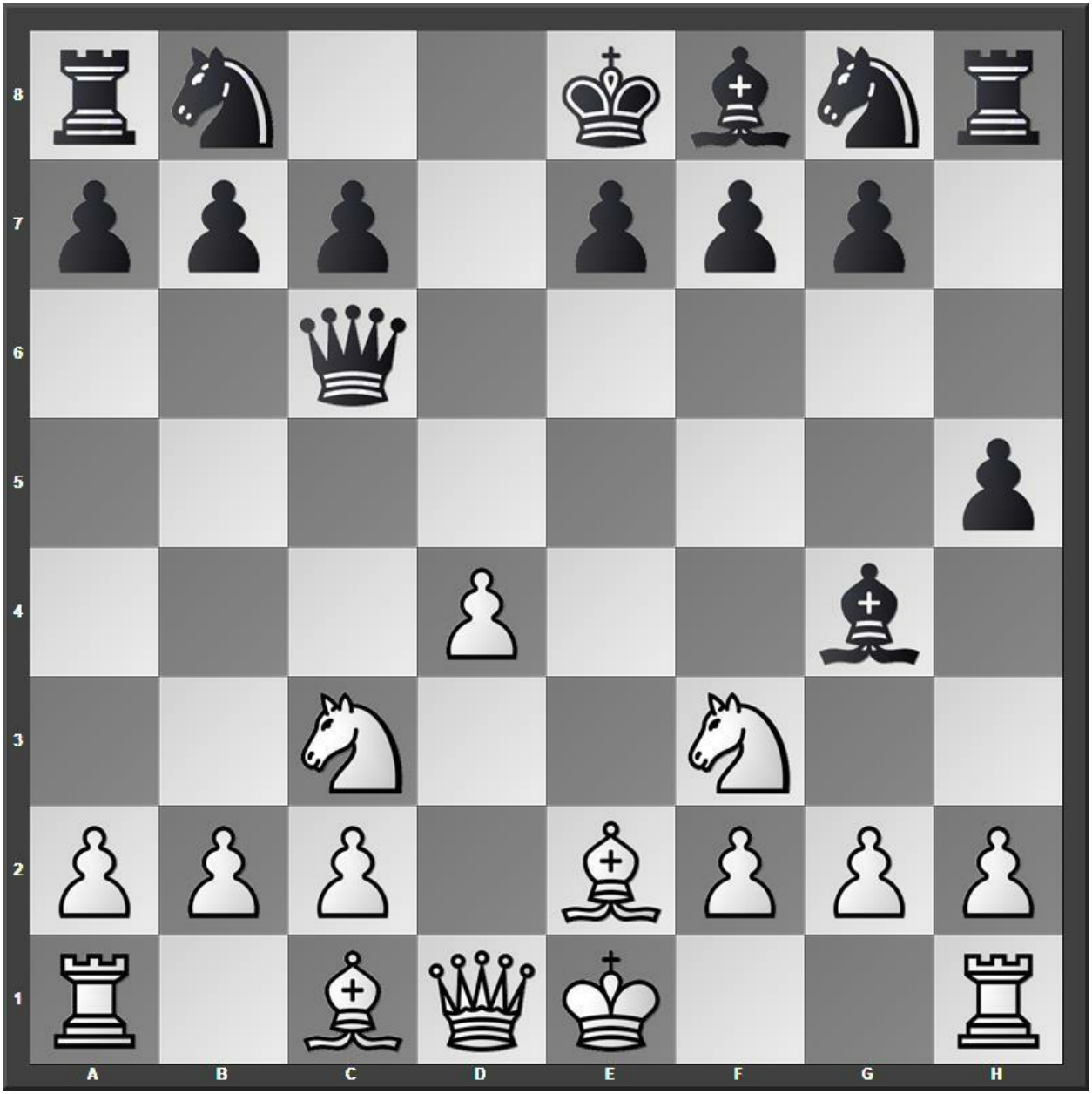
I plan to follow basic opening principles until I see a tactical opportunity to increase my advantage.

**5…Bg4**

This is a fine move. Black develops a minor piece to a safe and active square. It pins the knight on f3 that protects d4.

**6.Be2 Qc6**

This losing blunder occurs frequently in the Scandinavian The same blunder can occur as early as the move 3…Qc6.



Instantly I recognized the common pattern. This presents me with an opportunity for a tactical shot that wins quickly.

**7.Bb5**

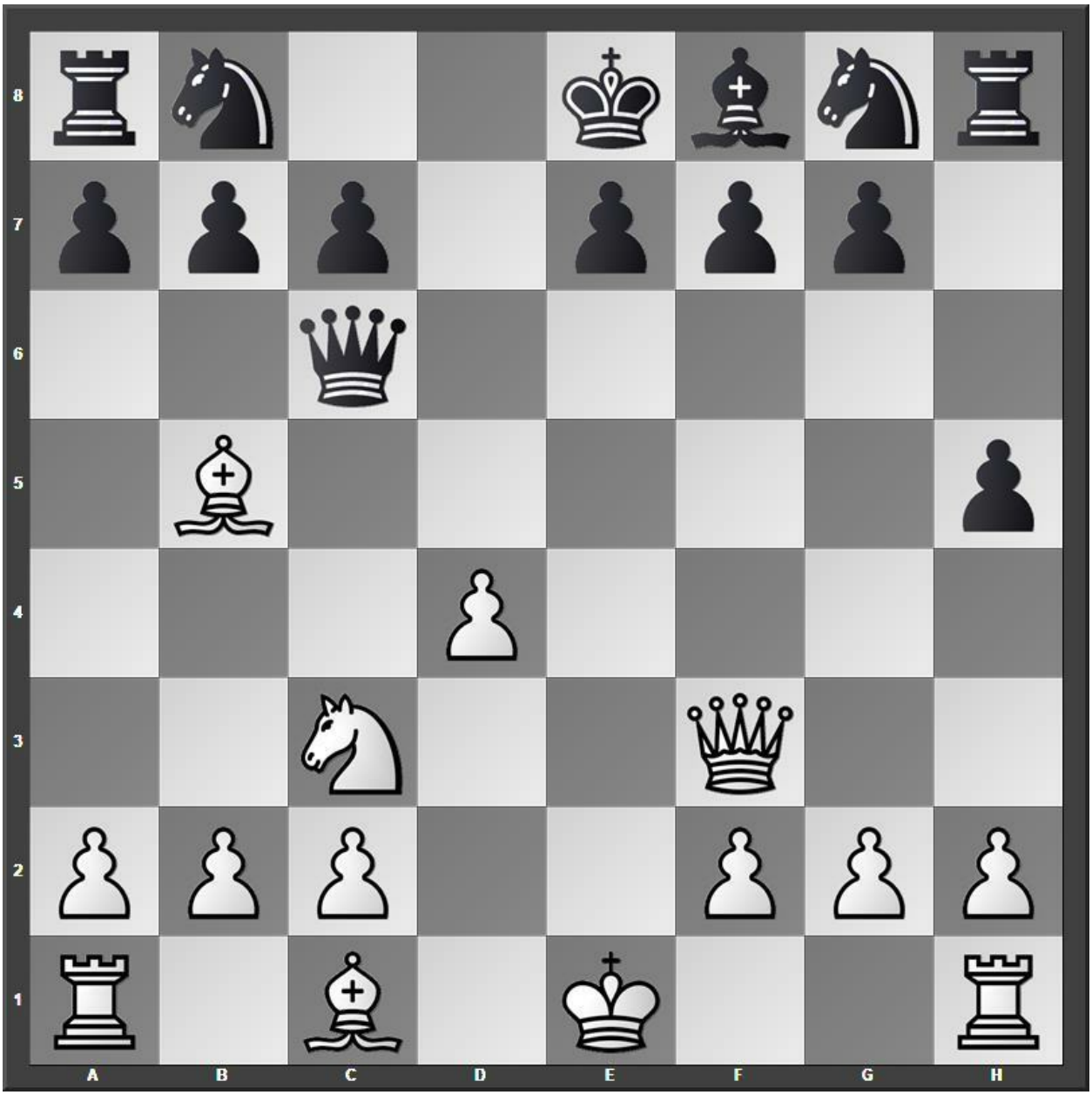
My bishop pins Black queen to the king. White will win the queen for a

minor piece. A lost queen means a lost game.

**7…Bxf3**

My opponent hopes that I will blunder with 8.Bxc6+ Bxc6. No, I don't. Instead, I capture with the queen on f3 to win.

**8.Qxf3 1–0**




The final position. White will win the queen for a bishop.

Black resigns

# Game 30 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qd6 4.d4 Be6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 22.08.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qd6**

**4.d4**

**4…Be6**

Black usually plays 4...Nf6 5.Nf3 a6 or 5...c6 to keep a White knight out of b5.

**5.Nf3 Nc6**

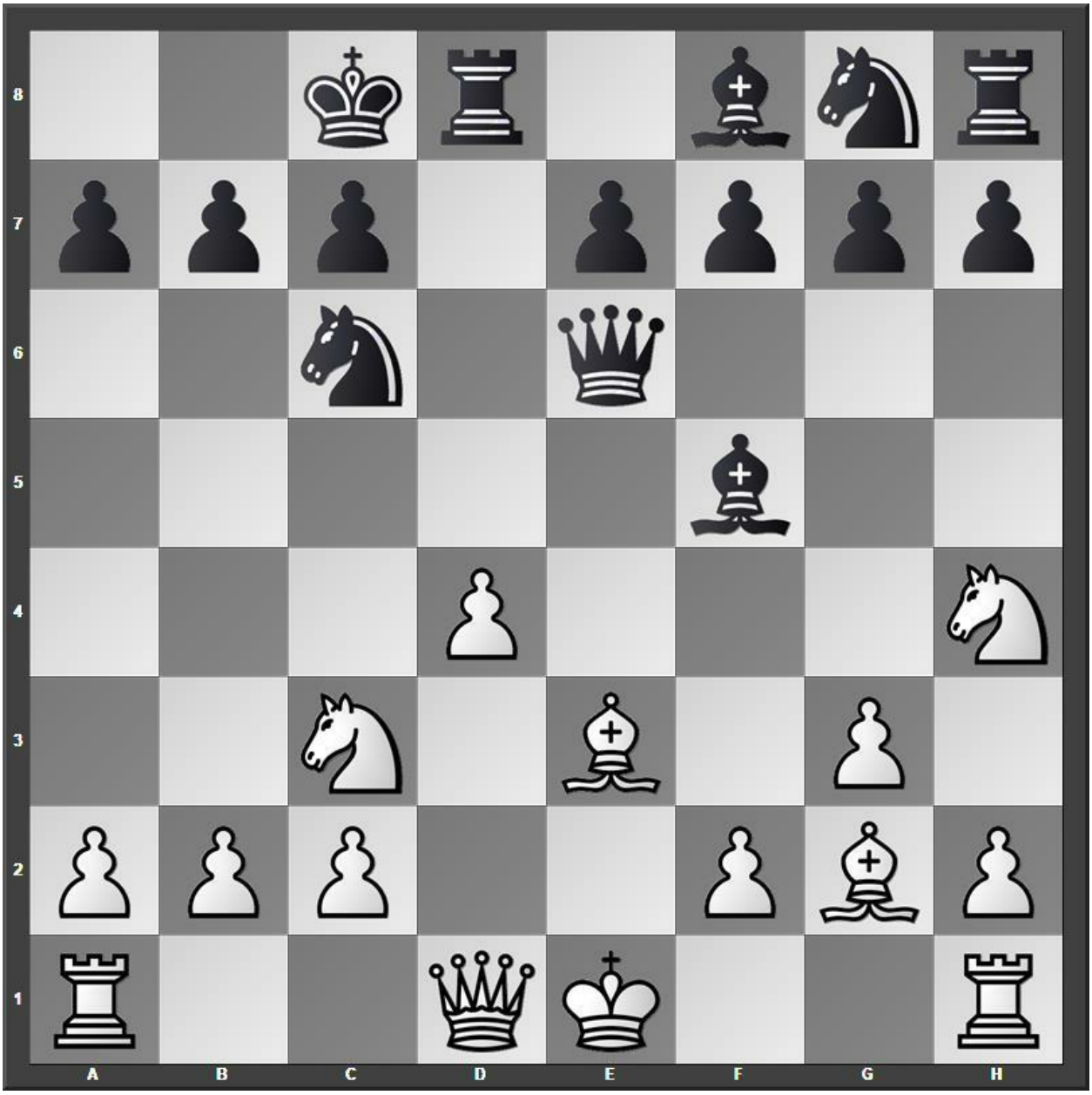
**6.g3 0–0–0**

My opponent rapidly castles queenside, but the lack of kingside development is likely to prove fatal for Black.

**7.Be3 Bf5**

**8.Bg2 Qg6**

**9.Nh4 Qe6**

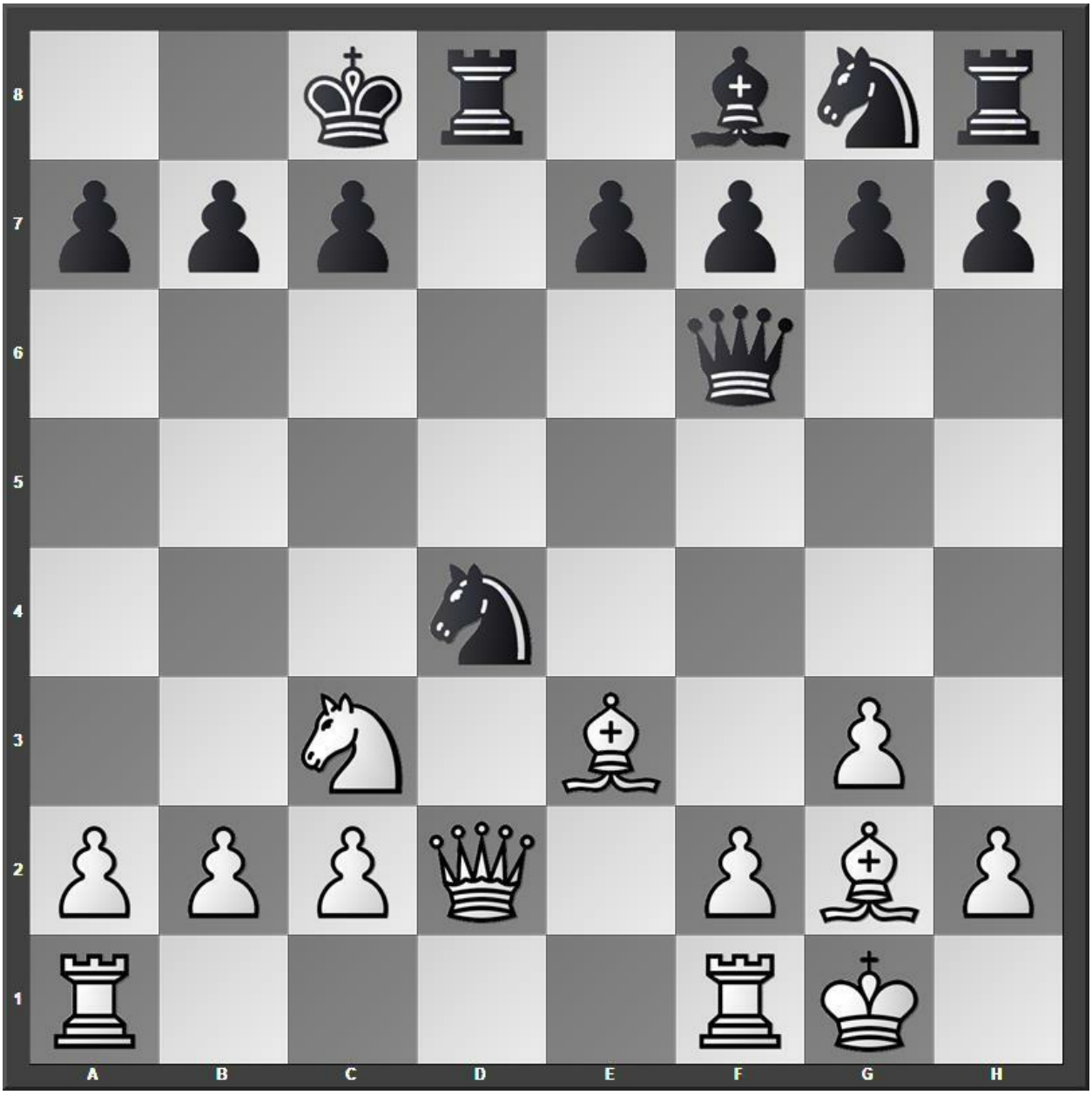


Now I should have played 10.d5 Qf6 11.Nxf5 Qxf5 12.Be4 Qh3 13.Qf3 Ne5 14.Qf4 and White wins a piece.

**10.Nxf5 Qxf5**

**11.0–0 Qf6**

**12.Qd2 Nxd4**



I have counterplay for the pawn 13.Nd5 Nf3+ 14.Bxf3 Qxf3 15.Rad1 and now if 15...e6 16.Nb6+ Kb8 17.Qxd8 mate.

**13.Bxd4 Rxd4**

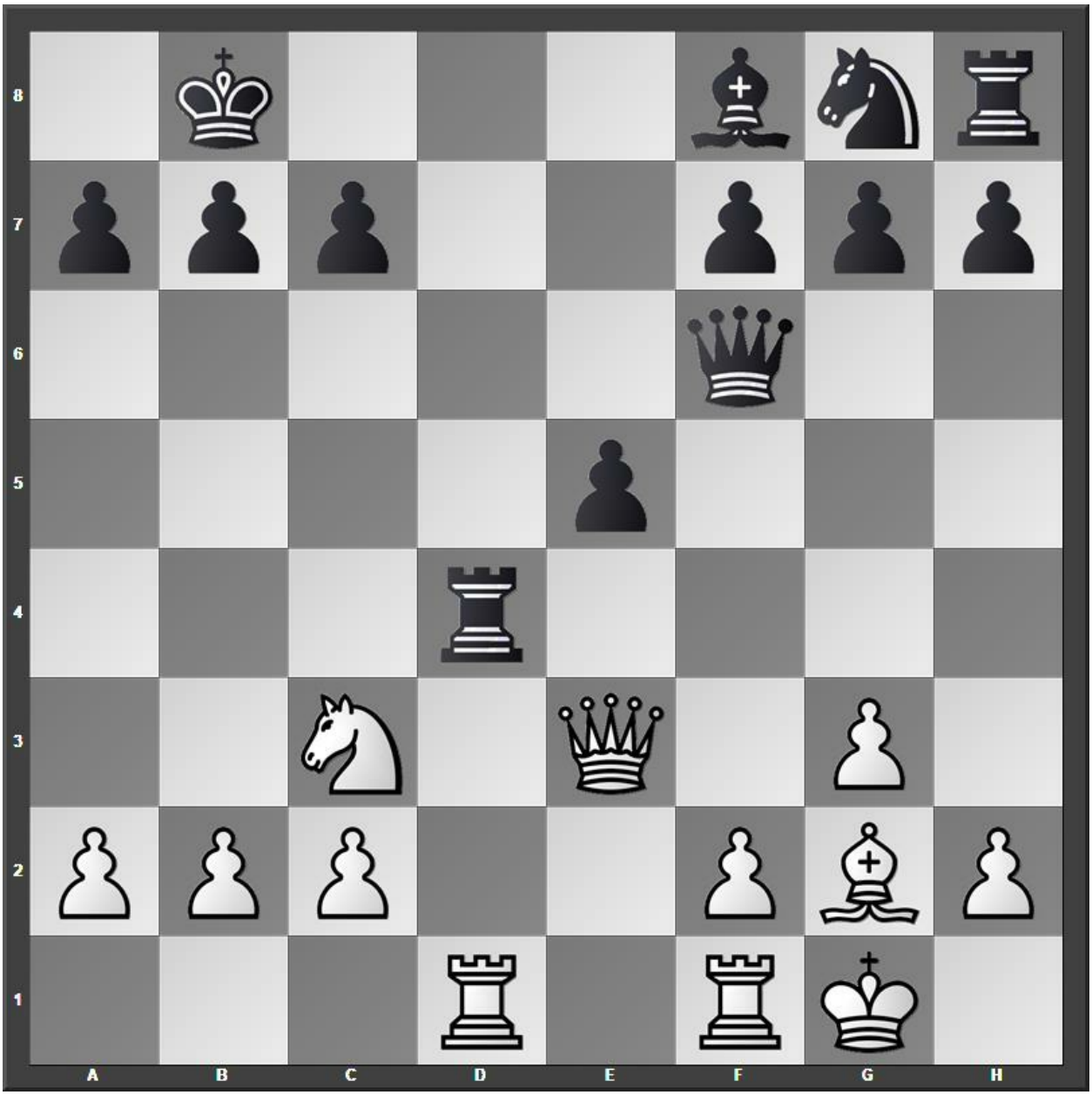
If 13...Qxd4 14.Qe2 Qb6 15.Rfd1 Rxd1+ 16.Rxd1 e6 17.Nd5 Qxb2 18.Nxc7 and White wins.

**14.Qe3 Kb8**

Or 14...Qb6 15.Nb5 Rd7 16.Nxa7+ Kb8 17.Qxb6 cxb6 18.Nb5 White stands

better.

**15.Rad1 e5**



**16.Rxd4 exd4**

Or 16...Bc5 17.Qxe5 Be7 18.Qe4 c6 19.Rd7 Kc8 20.Rfd1 Qe6 21.Qf4 and White wins.

**17.Qe8+ Qd8**

**18.Qxd8# 1–0**

Black is checkmated

# Game 31 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qd6 4.d4 Nf6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com, 24.06.2021

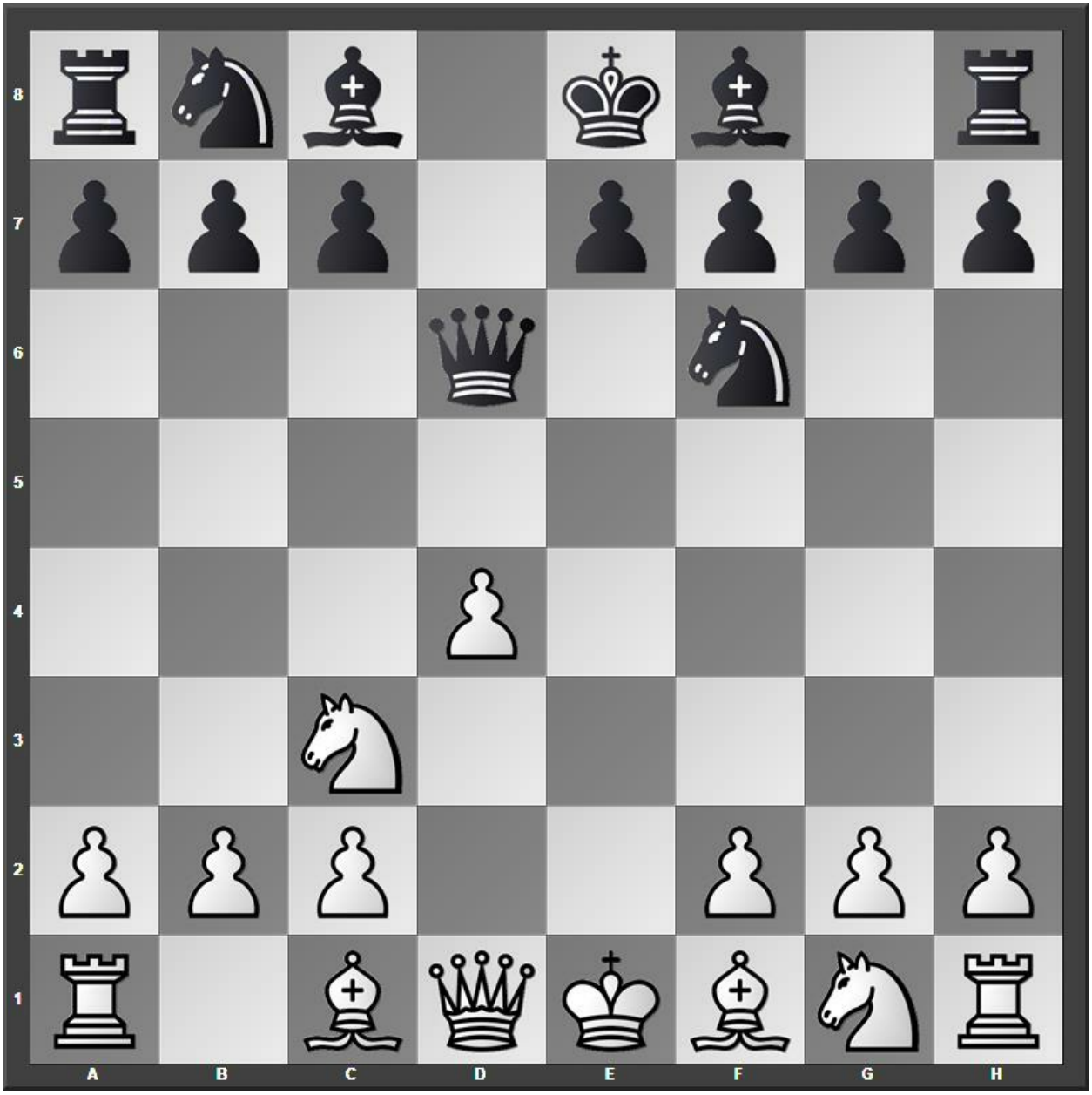
**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qd6**

**4.d4 Nf6**

Black develops a knight which is certainly a good strategy.



**5.Nf3 c6**

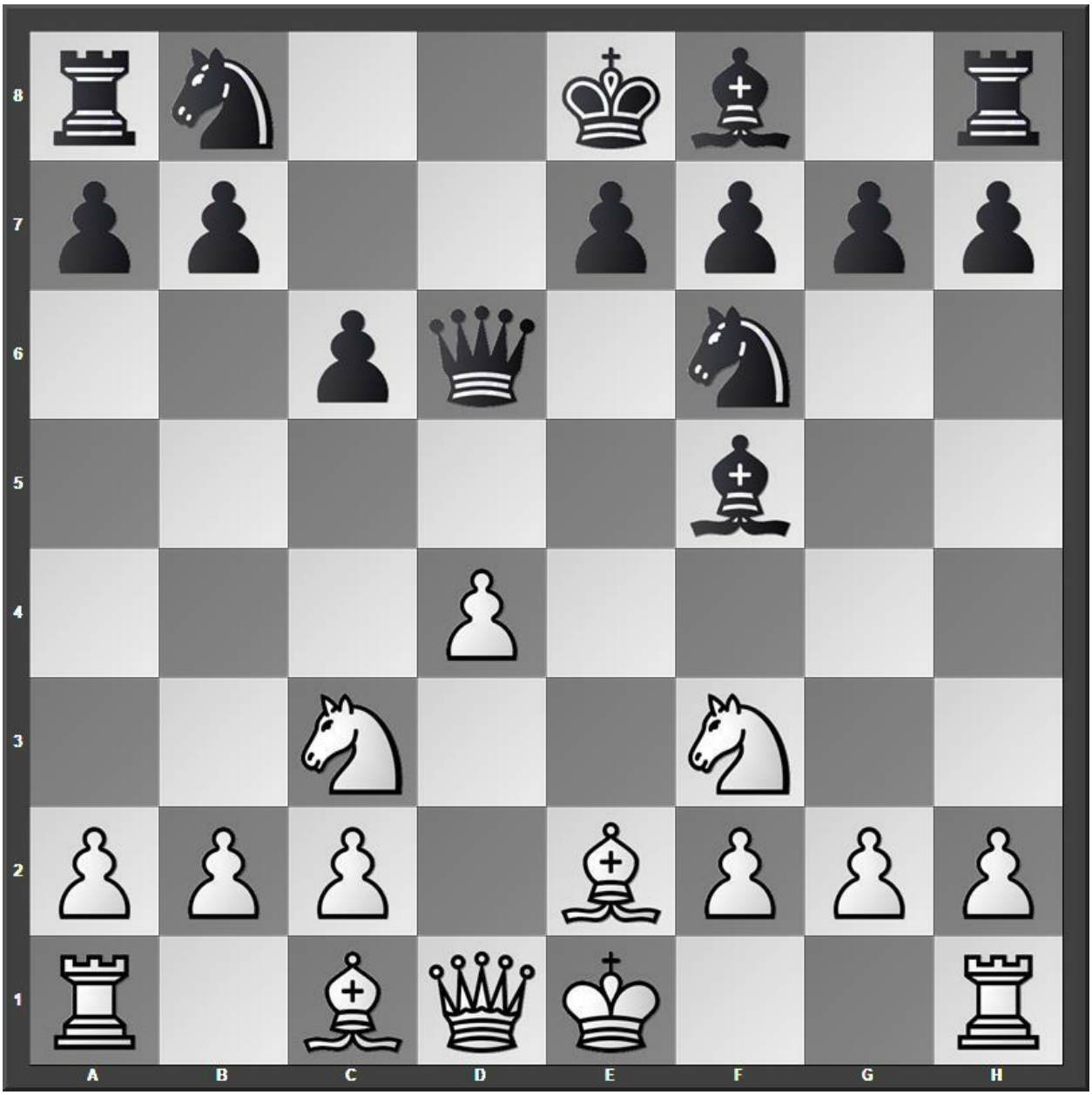
Theory recommends Black play 5…a6 or 5…c6 to keep a piece out of b5. It appears Black is a good player who has a reasonable idea as to how to play this opening.

One idea for White is to play g3. This means I could put one bishop on g2. The other would come to Bf4. This bishop would be protected by g3 and attack Black's queen.

Another promising idea is to play 6.Ne5 Nbd7 7.Nc4.

A modest but safe choice in 6.Be2.

**6.Be2 Bf5**

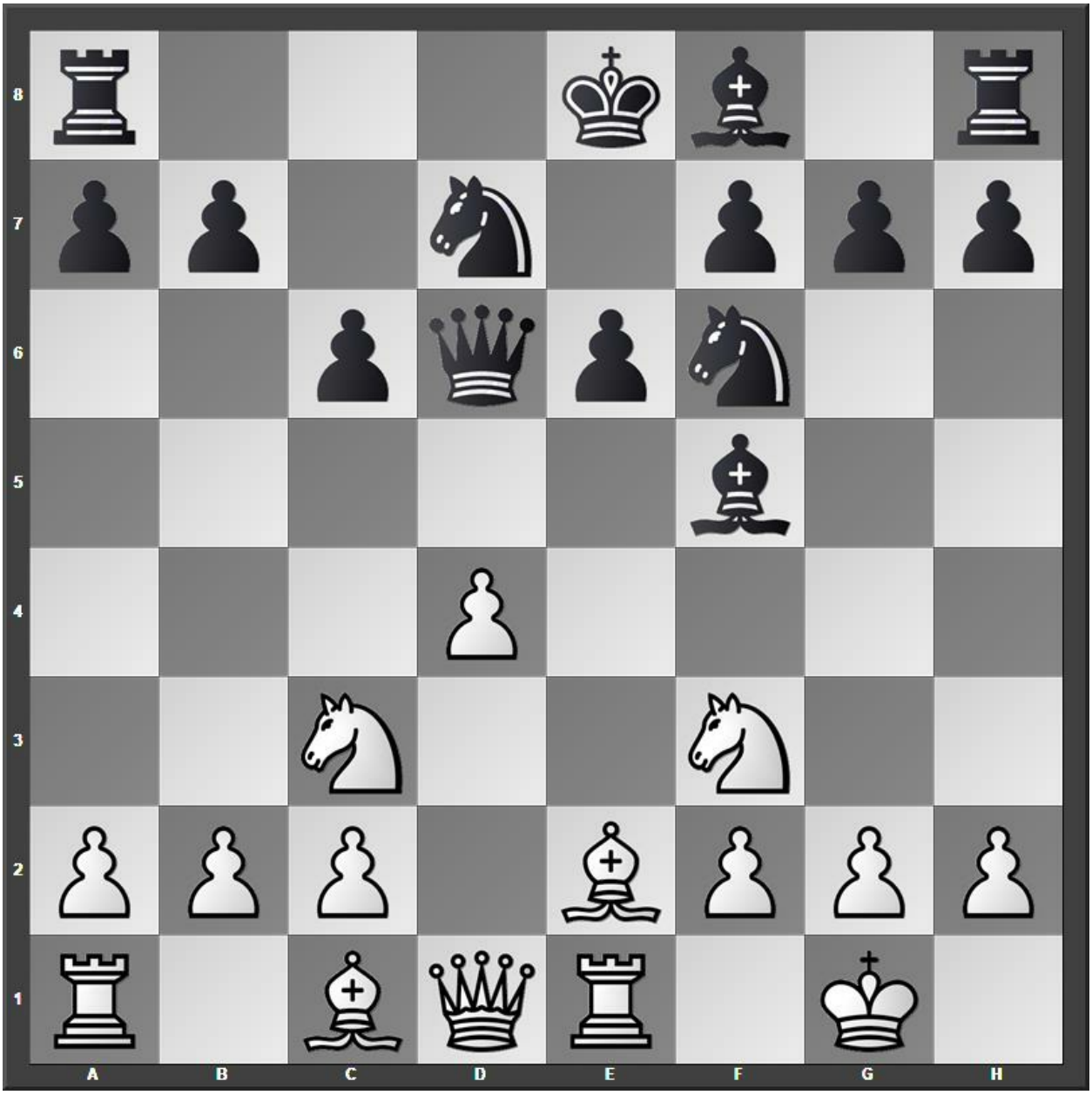


If 6...Bg4 White can play 7.h3 with a slight advantage.

**7.0–0 Nbd7**

I could have harassed the bishop with 8.Nh4, but I focus on quick development. It may not be the best, but it’s good.

**8.Re1 e6**



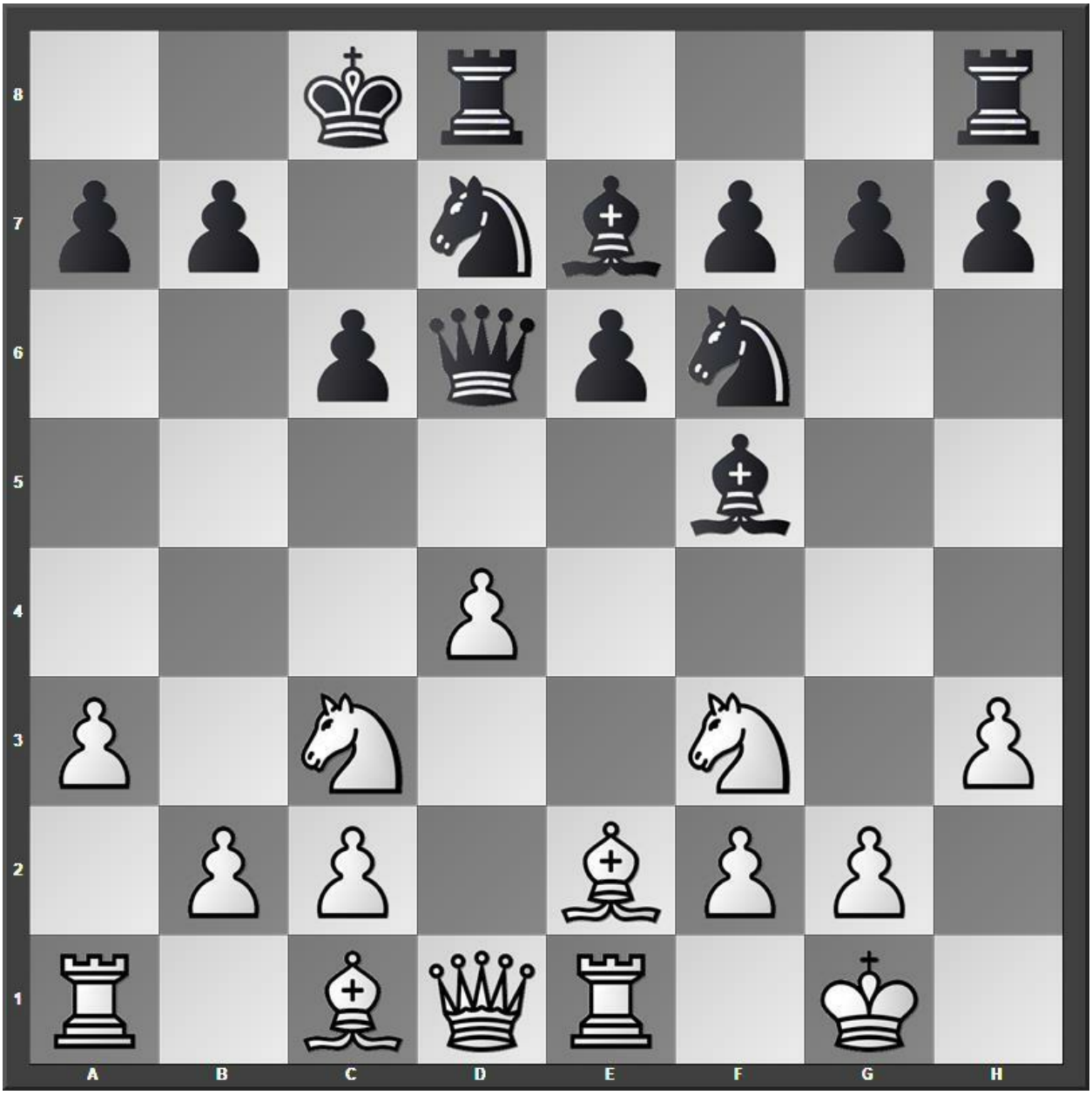
Before I move my dark-squared bishop, I take b4 away from Black's queen or bishop.

**9.a3 Be7**

Now Black has developed all four minor pieces.

**10.h3 0–0–0**

Now I take g4 away from Black's minor pieces. However, I take a risk that Black will push kingside pawns and attack.



My opponent has played the opening well. Chances are equal. Soon we move on to the middlegame.

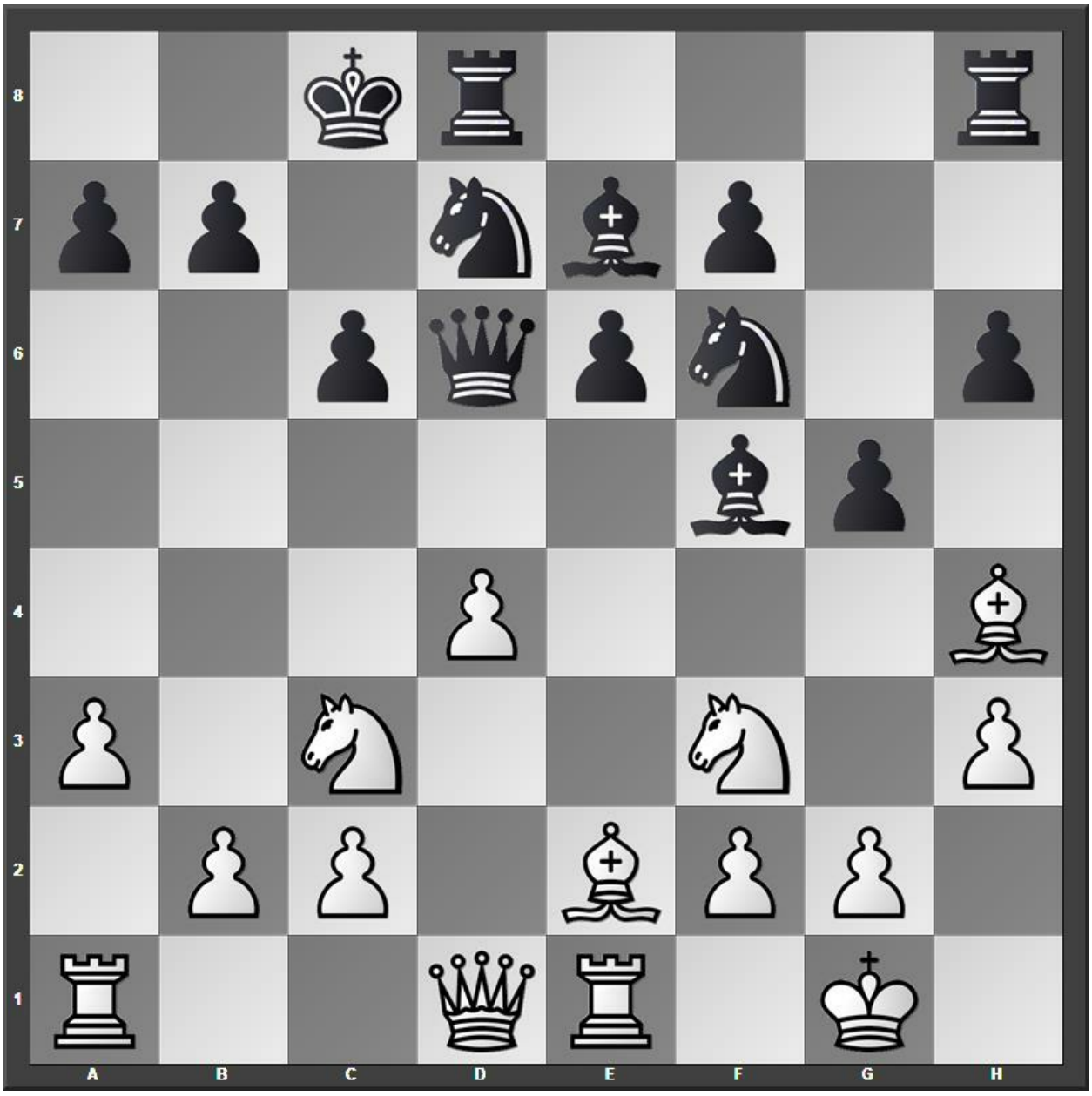
First, I must develop my second bishop. Bf4 is out of the question in view of Black's queen. Be3 blocks the rook. Moving Bd2 or to Bb2 don't seem to fit the position.

I like Bg5 and retreating the bishop via Bh4 to Bg3. I recall Karpov suggesting this maneuver in the 1970s. Yes, I was alive and playing then. His opening was a Tarrasch French Defence, but his position shares some

similarities to mine.

**11.Bg5 h6**

**12.Bh4 g5**



Black might do better to retreat the queen to 12...Qc7. This would give her more moves in the face of 13.Bg3.

Here come the pawns!

**13.Bg3 e5**

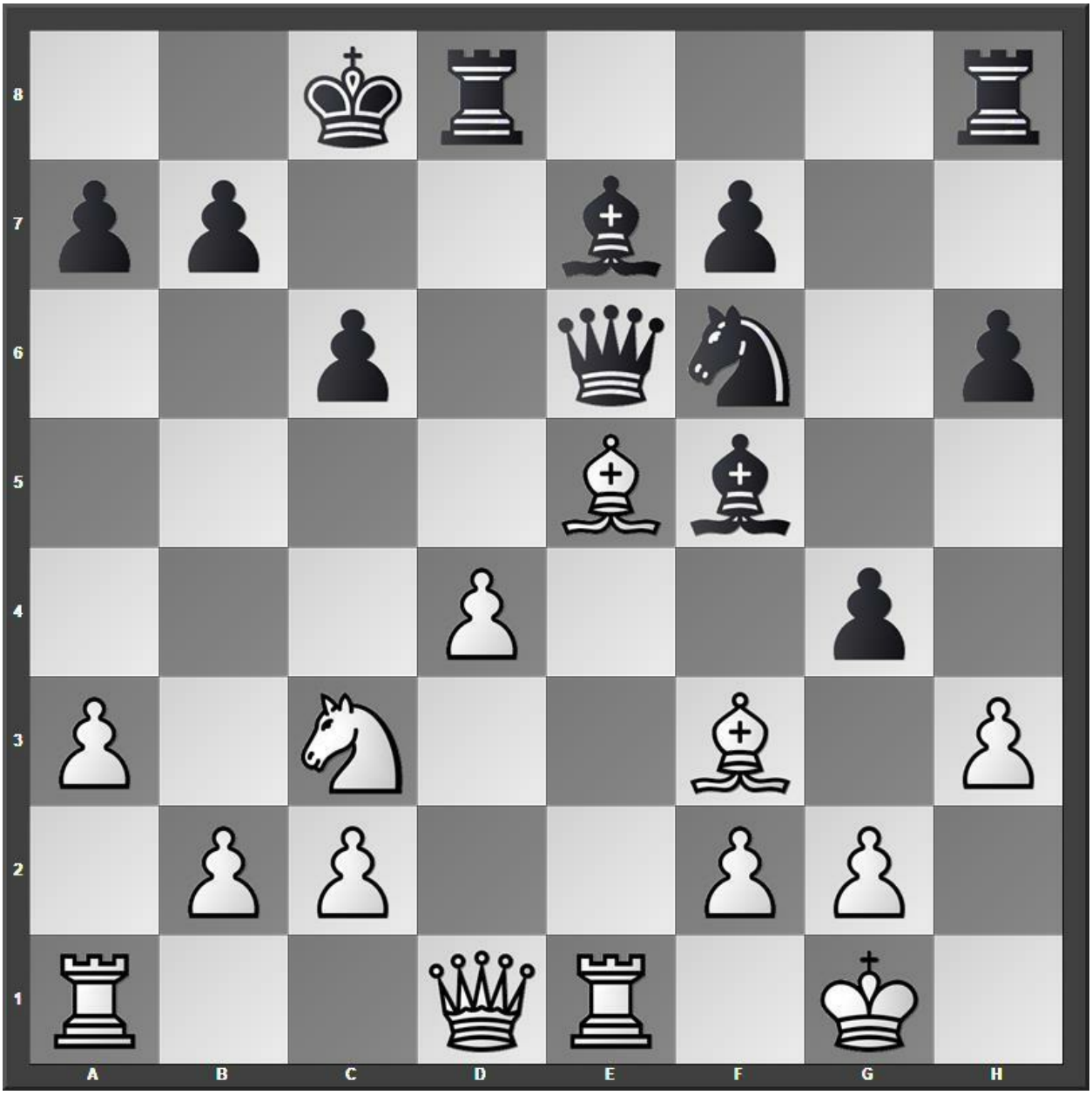
Black’s queen has no safe moves. She must push a pawn and try to hide in the wide-open center. My advantage lies in the fact that all my pieces are active with a rook on e1.

One White idea is 14.Bd3 Bxd3 15.dxe5 with a pawn fork on e5 giving me great chances. Instead I threaten 15.Nxf7.

**14.Nxe5 Nxe5**

**15.Bxe5 Qe6**

**16.Bf3 g4**



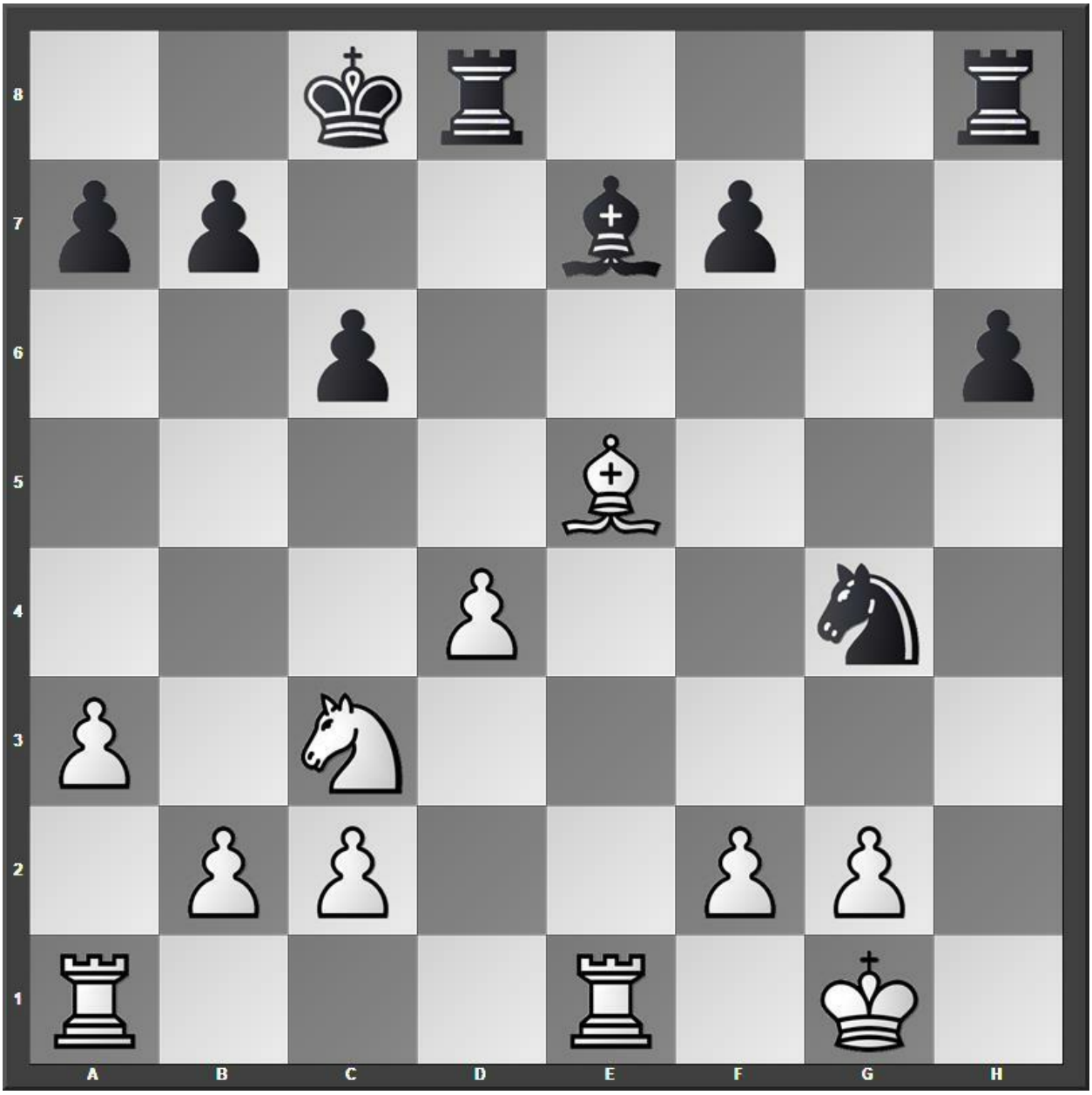
Black probably dreamed of playing this when I played h3. This begins a combination where Black looked ahead three moves but missed my fourth move until too late.

**17.hxg4 Bxg4**

**18.Bxg4 Qxg4**

**19.Qxg4+ Nxg4**

White wins the Exchange (a minor piece for a rook).



**20.Bxh8 Rxh8**

**21.Rxe7 f6**

**22.f3 Kd8**

**23.Rae1 1–0**

Now White wins a knight in addition to the rook.

Black resigns

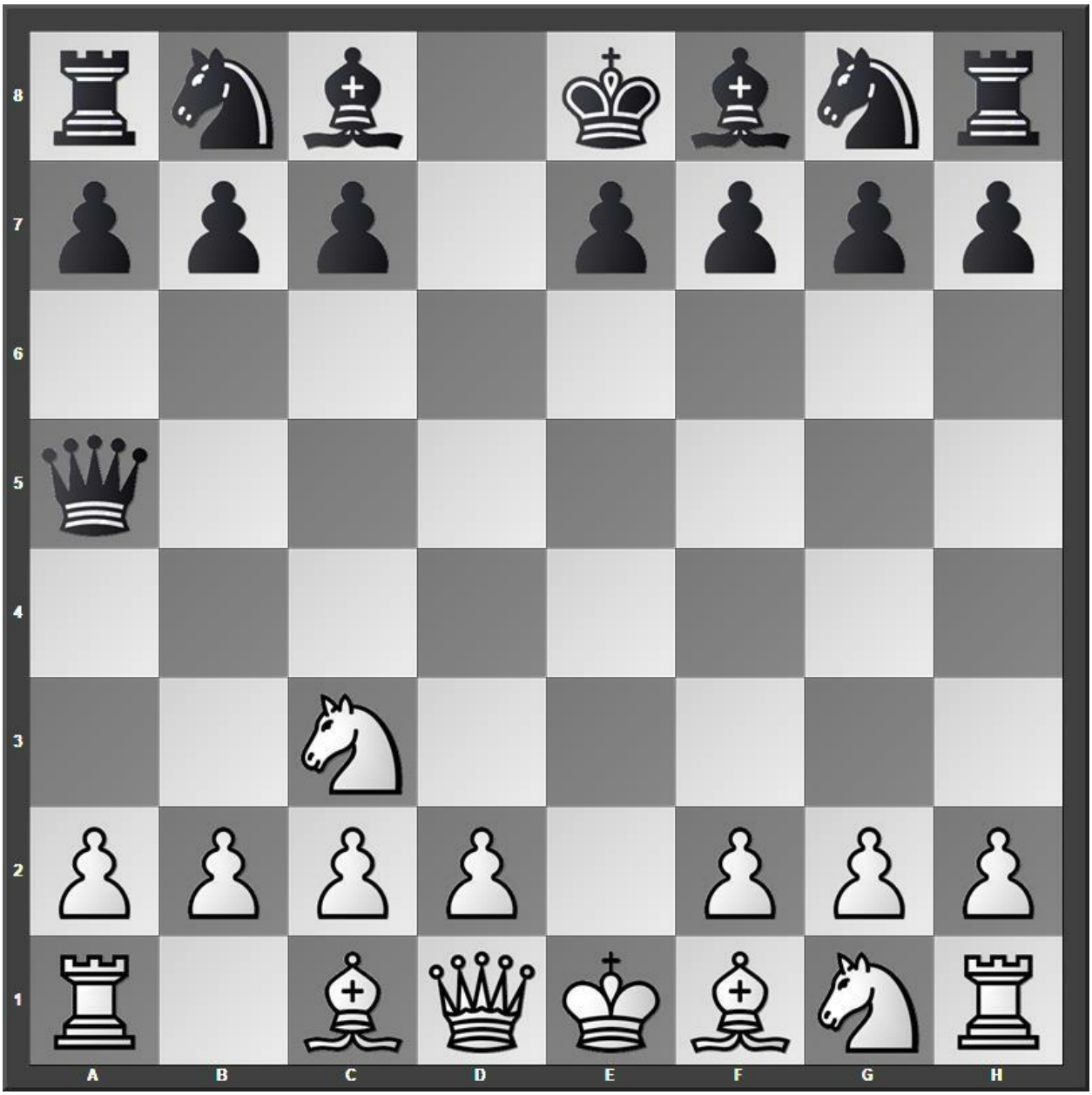
# Game 32 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qa5 4.d4 Nf6]

Sawyer – Guest, Chess.com 04.06.2021

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qa5**



Black queen occupies a useful square in line with the White king and the

center squares d5 and e5.

**4.d4 Nf6**

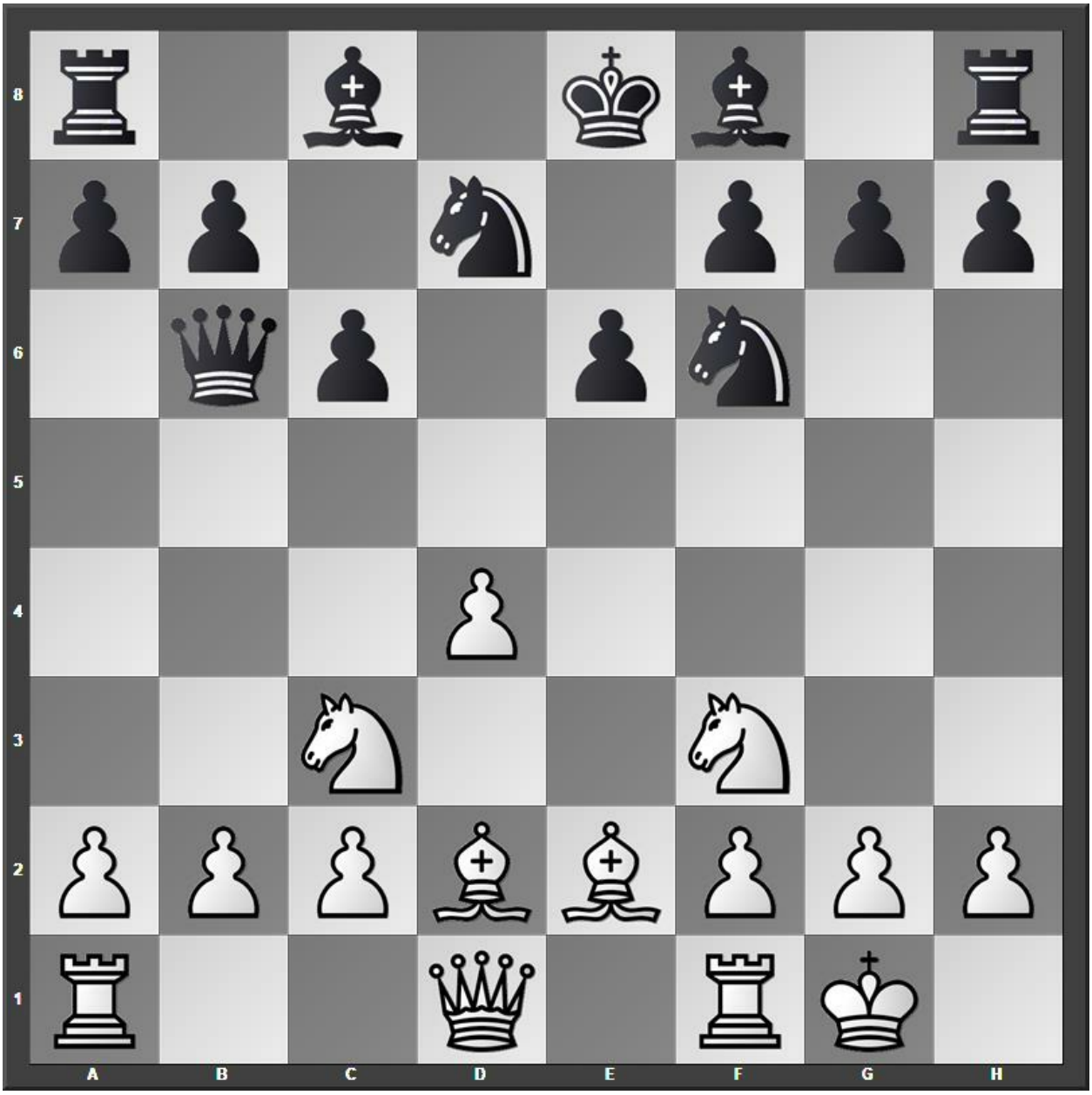
**5.Nf3 e6**

Normally Black develops a bishop to g4 or f5 before e6.

**6.Be2 c6**

**7.0–0 Nbd7**

**8.Bd2 Qb6**



Now I set a trap. If 9.a3 Qxb2 10.Na4 wins Black's queen.

**9.a3 Bd6**

**10.Re1 0–0**

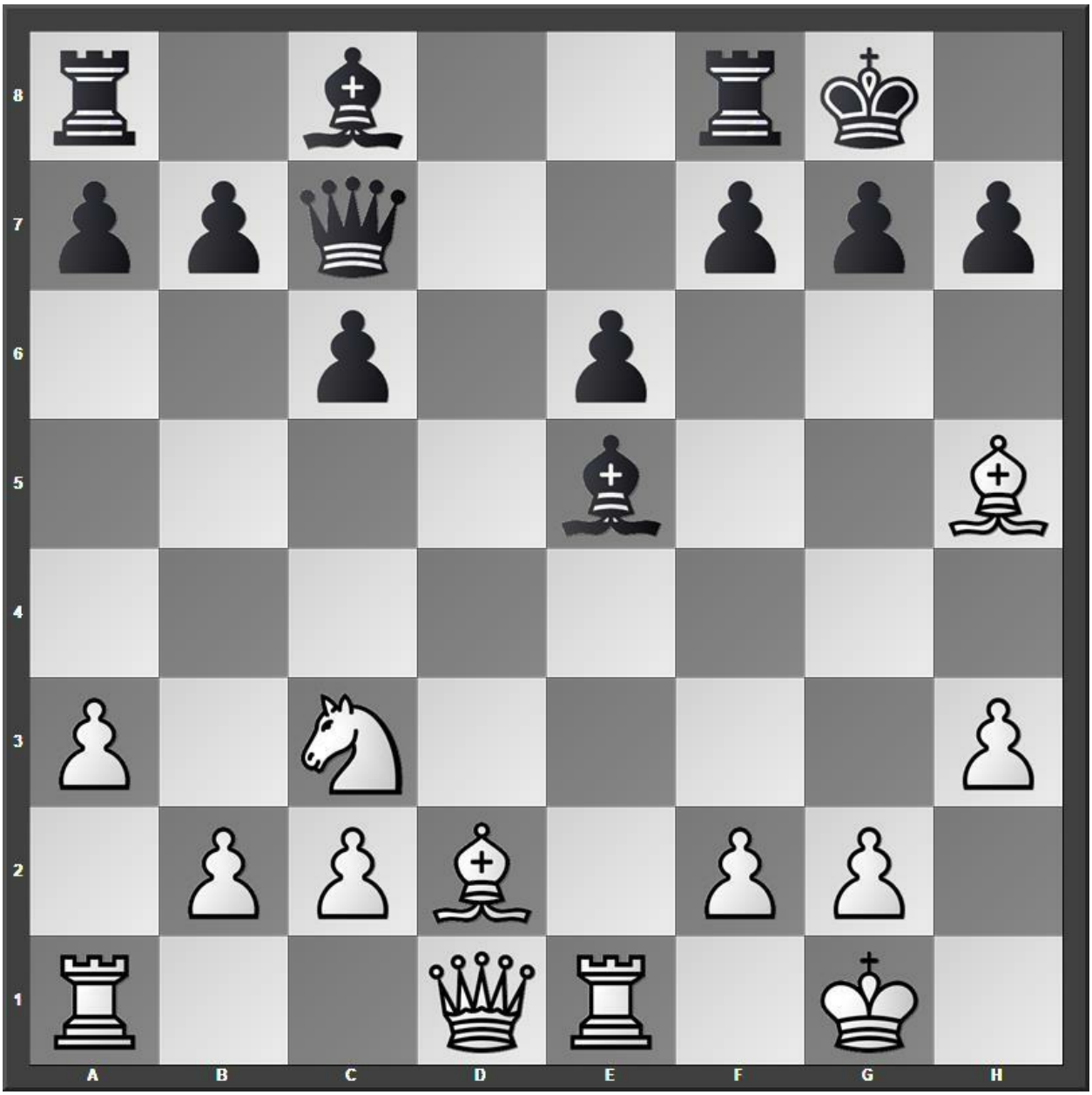
**11.h3 Nh5**

This h5 knight is unprotected. I uncover an attack on h5 while making it look like I'm playing a move to the center.

**12.Ne5 Nxe5**

**13.dxe5 Bxe5**

**14.Bxh5 Qc7**



Black lost a knight. Now I want to swap pieces, not pawns.

**15.Qe2 Bh2+**

**16.Kh1 Bf4**

**17.Bxf4 Qxf4**

**18.Qe3 Qf5**

**19.Bg4 Qg6**

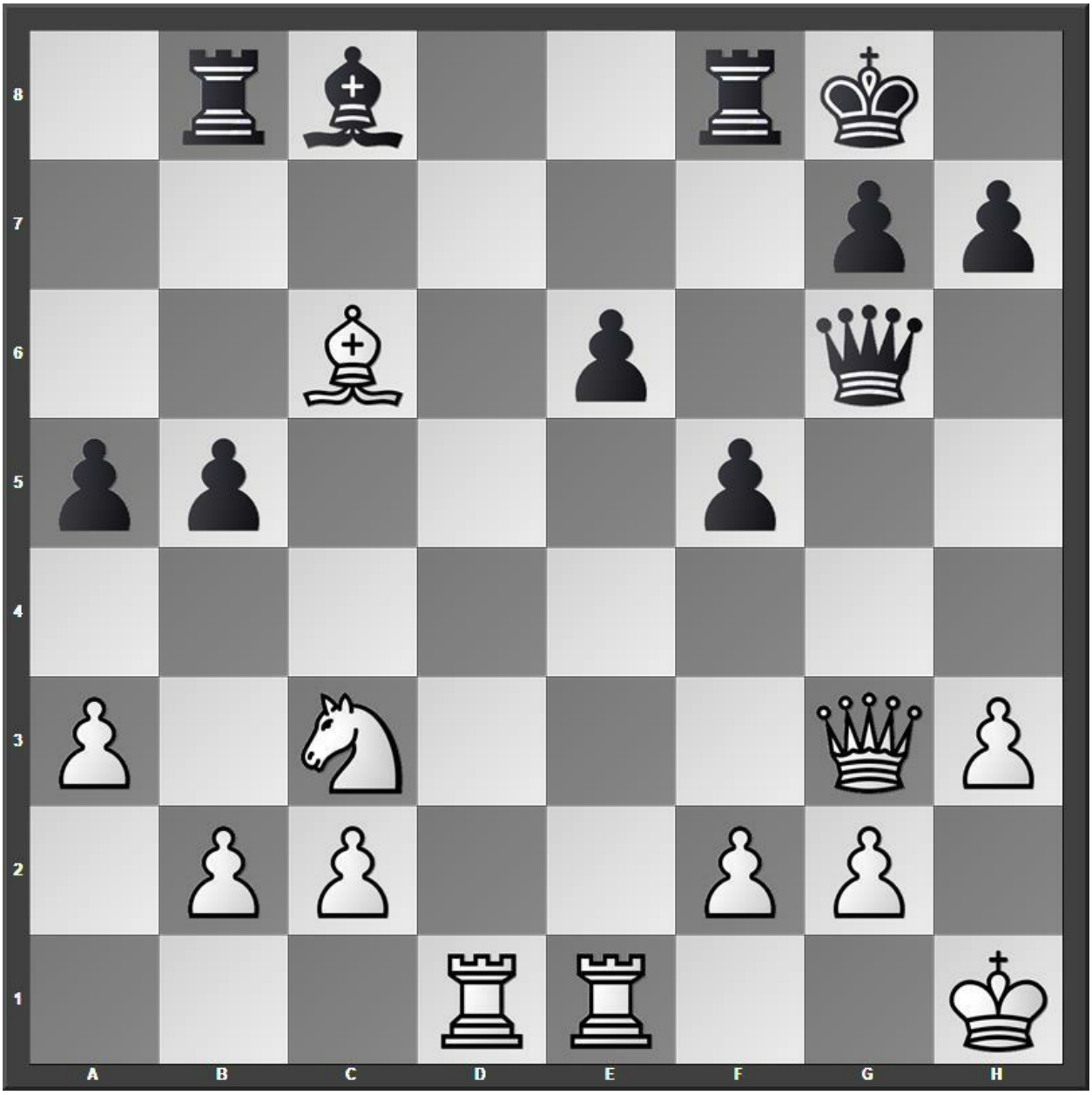
**20.Qd3 f5**

**21.Bf3 b5**

**22.Rad1 a5**

**23.Bxc6 Rb8**

**24.Qg3**



**24…Qf7**

If 24...Qxg3 25.fxg3 Black just loses a knight. Black's game completely falls apart. Now White gets a winning endgame.

**25.Qxb8 f4**

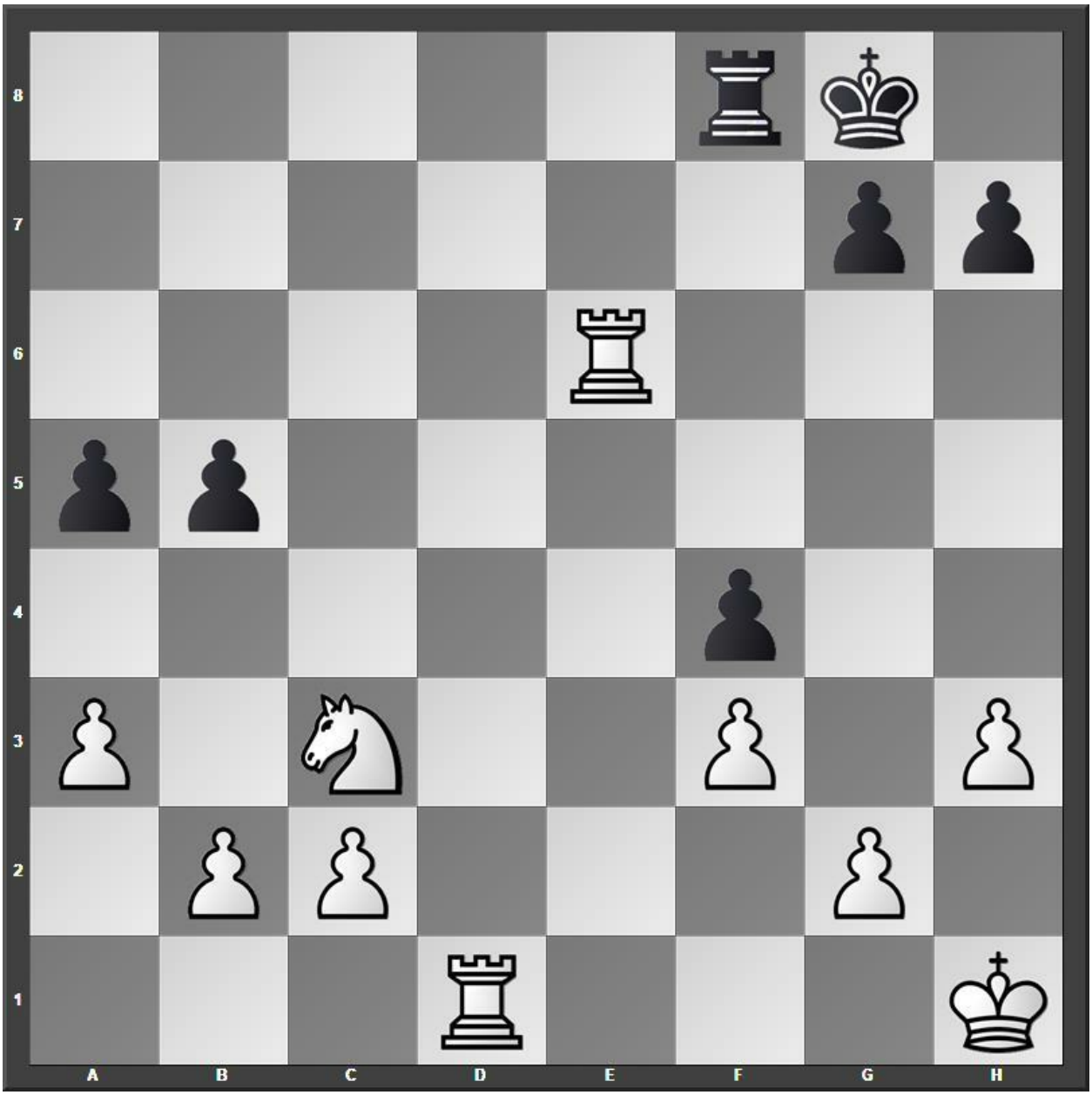
**26.f3 Bd7**

**27.Qd6 Bxc6**

**28.Qxc6 Qf5**

**29.Qxe6+ Qxe6**

**30.Rxe6 1–0**



Black resigns

# Game 33 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qa5 4.Nf3 Nf6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 17.01.2022

**1.e4 d5**

**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nc3 Qa5**

**4.Nf3 Nf6**

Or 5.d4 c6 6.Bc4 Bf5 7.Bd2 e6 with chances for both sides.

**5.h3 c6**

**6.b3 Bf5**

**7.Bb2 e6**

**8.Be2 Nbd7**

**9.Nh4 Bg6**

If 9...Ba3 10.Nxf5 exf5 11.Bxa3 Qxa3 favors Black.

**10.Nxg6 hxg6**

**11.Bd3 Bd6**

**12.Qe2 0–0–0**

**13.Na4 Nc5**

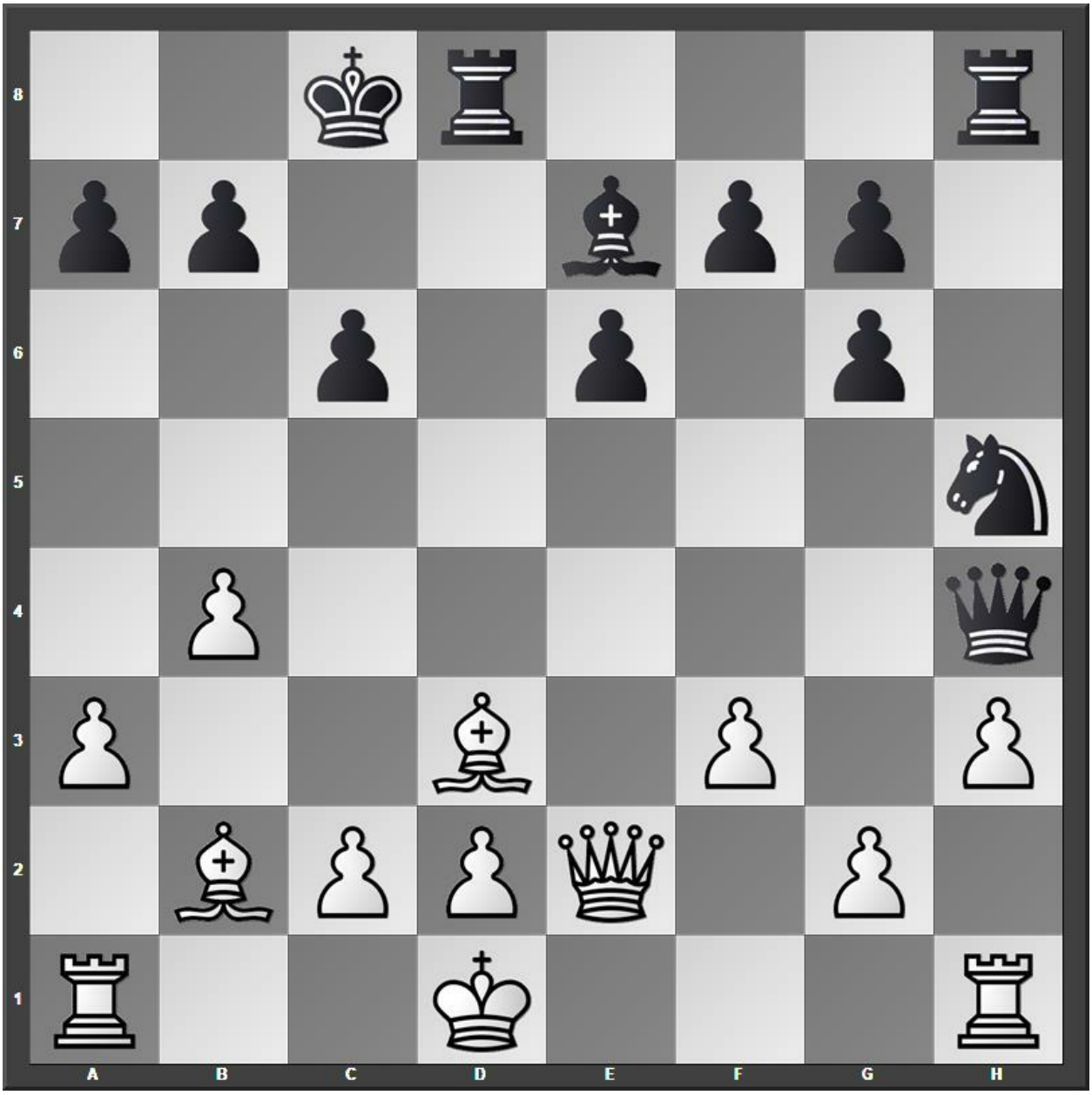
**14.Nxc5 Bxc5**

**15.a3 Be7**

**16.b4 Qh5**

**17.f3 Qh4+**

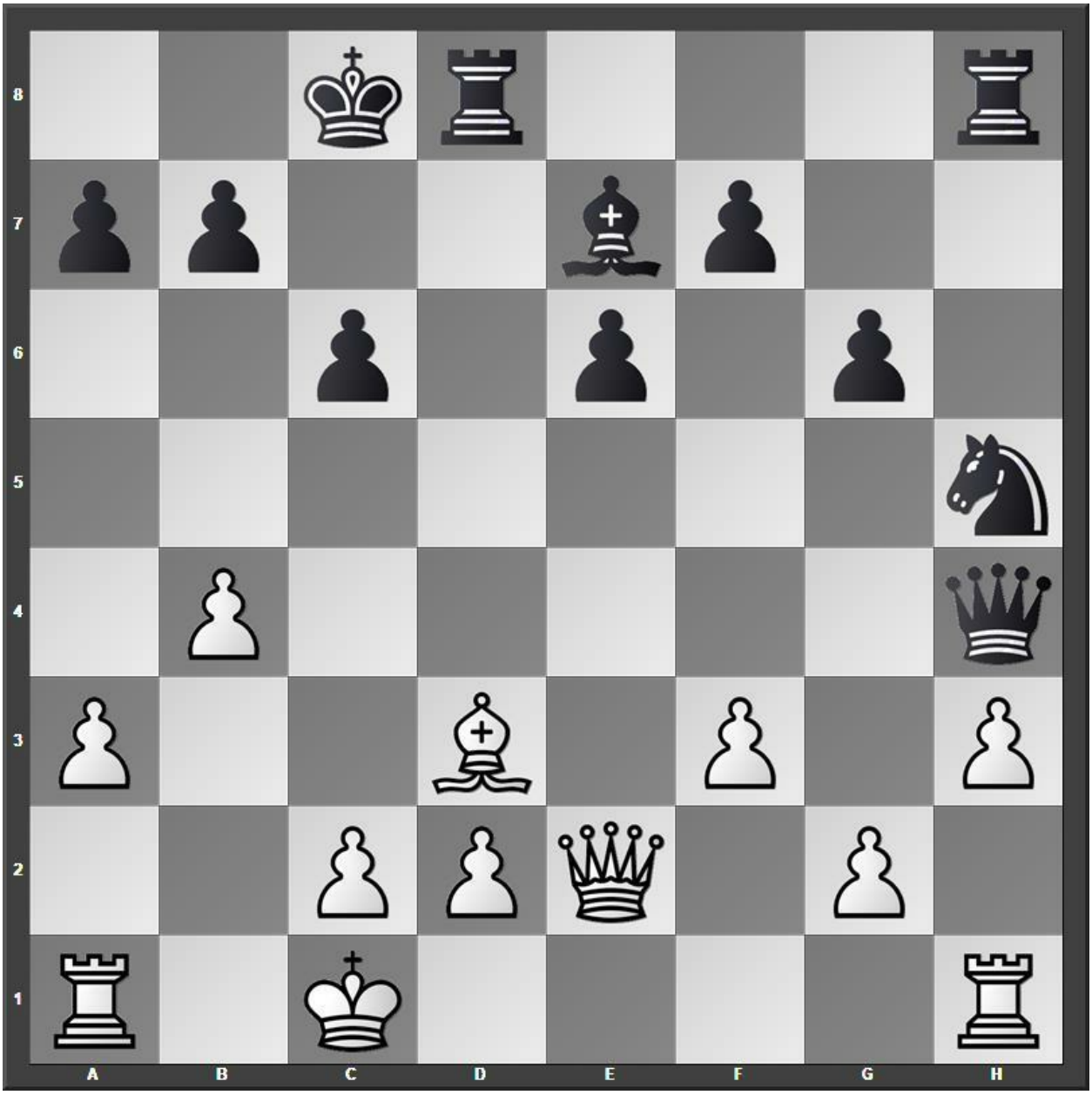
**18.Kd1 Nh5**



If 19.Qe1 Qg5 and Black stands better.

**19.Bxg7 Nxg7**

**20.Kc1 Nh5**



If 21.Qe1 Ng3 22.Rg1 Bf6 23.Rb1 Bd4 24.Rf1 Nxf1 25.Qxh4 Rxh4 26.Bxf1 Be5 Black is up a rook.

**21.Rg1 Nf4**

Black can attack both rooks at once by 21...Qd4 winning.

**22.Qe3 Nxd3+**

**23.cxd3 Qd4**

**24.Qxd4 Rxd4**

**25.Kc2 Rhd8 0–1**

White resigns

## Game 34 – B01 [3.Nc3 Qa5 4.Nf3 Nf6]

Guest – Sawyer, Chess.com, 21.01.2022

**1.e4 d5**

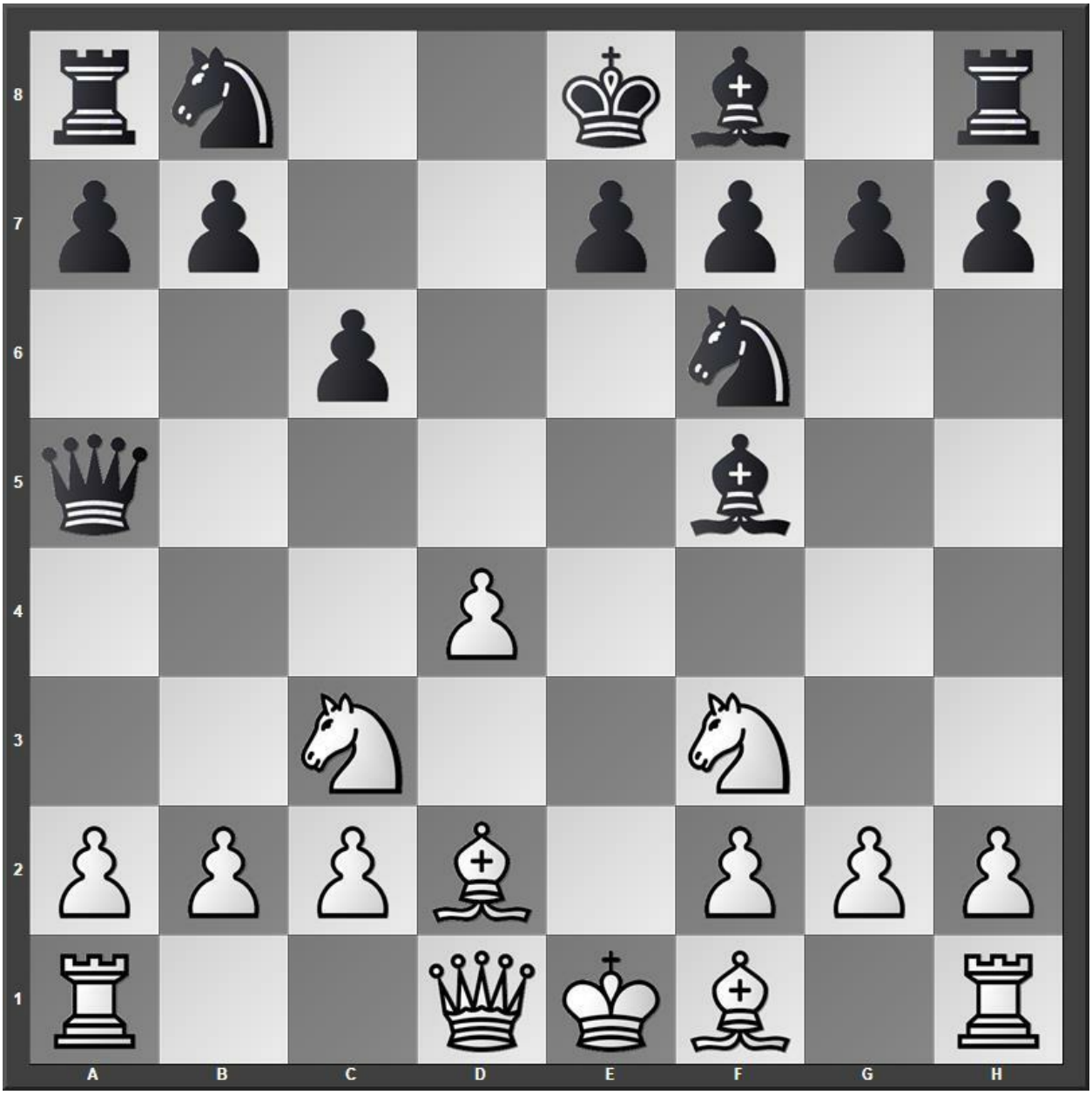
**2.exd5 Qxd5**

**3.Nf3 Nf6**

**4.Nc3 Qa5**

**5.d4 c6**

**6.Bd2 Bf5**



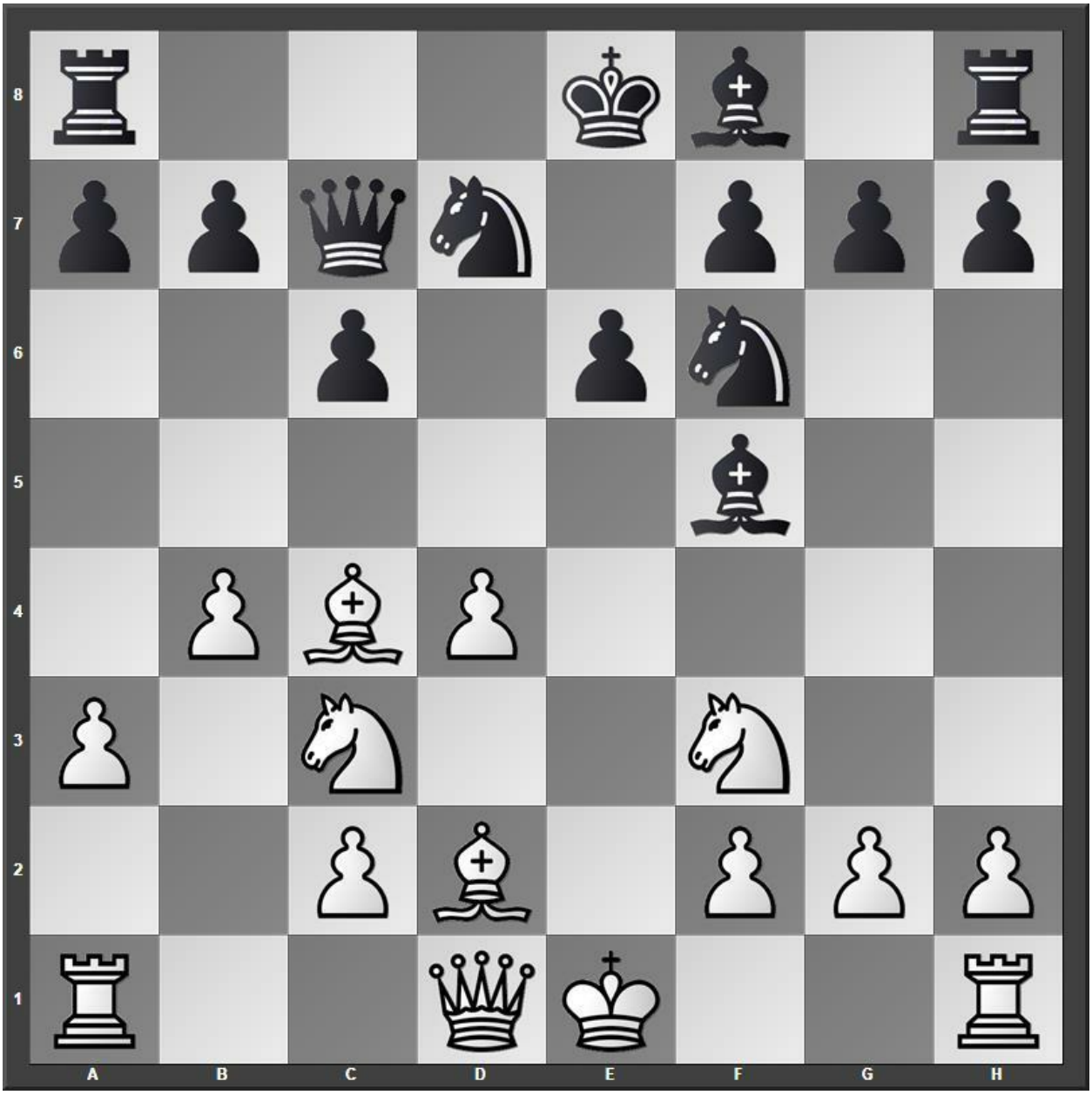
Black’s bishop goes to f5 and the queen will retreat to c7.

If 7.Bc4 e6 8.Qe2 Bb4 9.0–0–0 Nbd7 10.a3 Bxc3 11.Bxc3 Qc7 when White has space but Black is solid.

**7.a3 Nbd7**

**8.b4 Qc7**

**9.Bc4 e6**



If 10.Nh4 Bg4 with equality. Instead, White loses a pawn.

**10.Ne5 Nxe5**

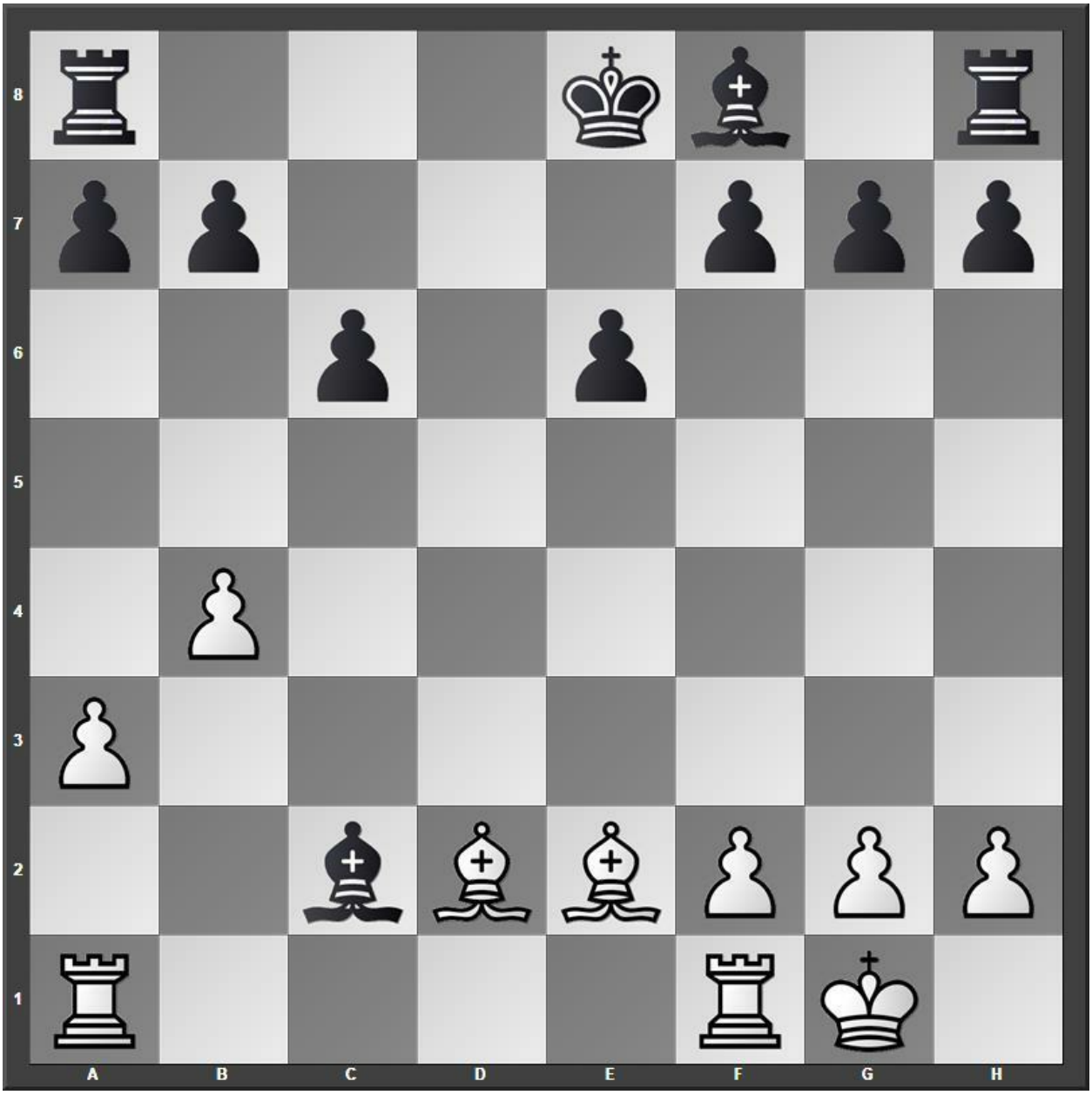
**11.dxe5 Qxe5+**

**12.Be2 Ne4**

**13.Nxe4 Qxe4**

**14.0–0 Qxc2**

**15.Qxc2 Bxc2**



Black is up two pawns, but White has some compensation.

**16.Bc3 Bb3**

**17.Rfe1 f6**

**18.Bd1 Bxd1**

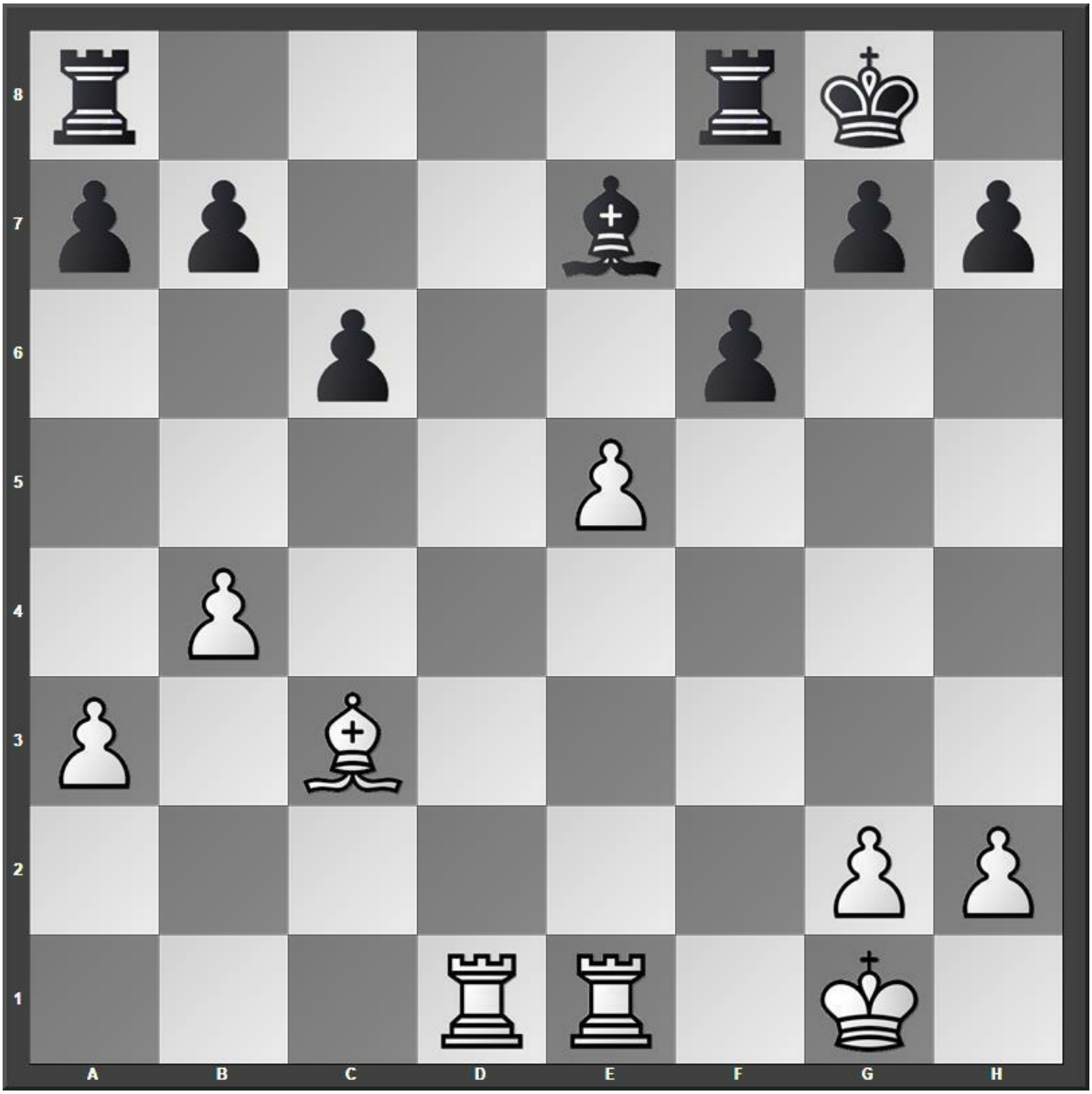
I almost played the safer 18...Bd5.

**19.Raxd1 e5**

**20.f4 Be7**

**21.fxe5 0–0**

This gives White a chance. Better is 21...Rd8.



I realized too late that 22.Rd7 actually favors White. Fortunately, my opponent did not play it.

**22.e6 Rfd8**

**23.Rd7 Rxd7**

**24.exd7 Kf8**

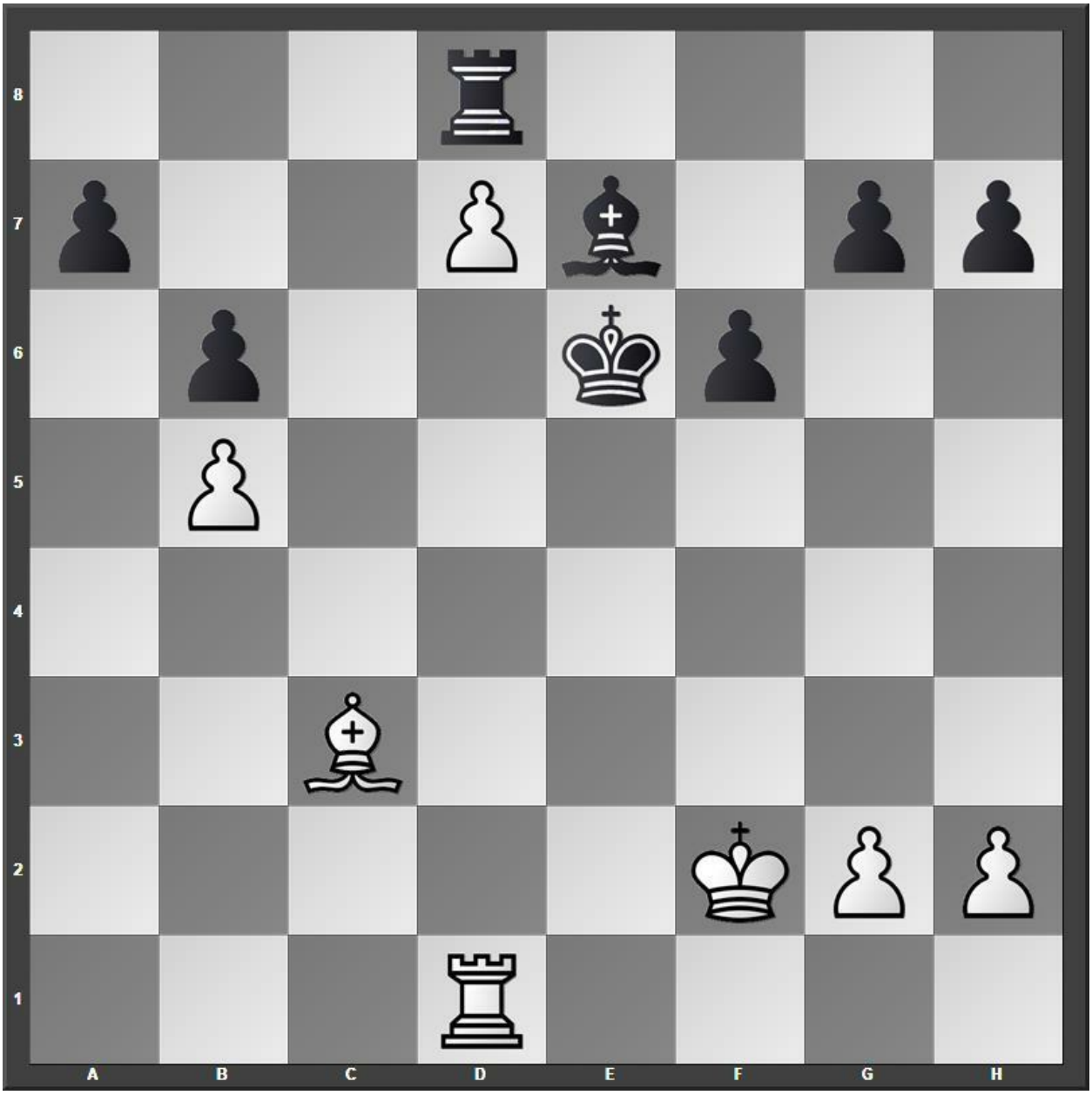
**25.a4 Rd8**

**26.Rd1 Kf7**

**27.b5 cxb5**

**28.axb5 b6**

**29.Kf2 Ke6**



If 30.Re1+ Kxd7 and Black stands better.

**30.g4 Rxd7**

**31.Re1+ Kf7**

**32.h4 f5**

**33.g5 g6**

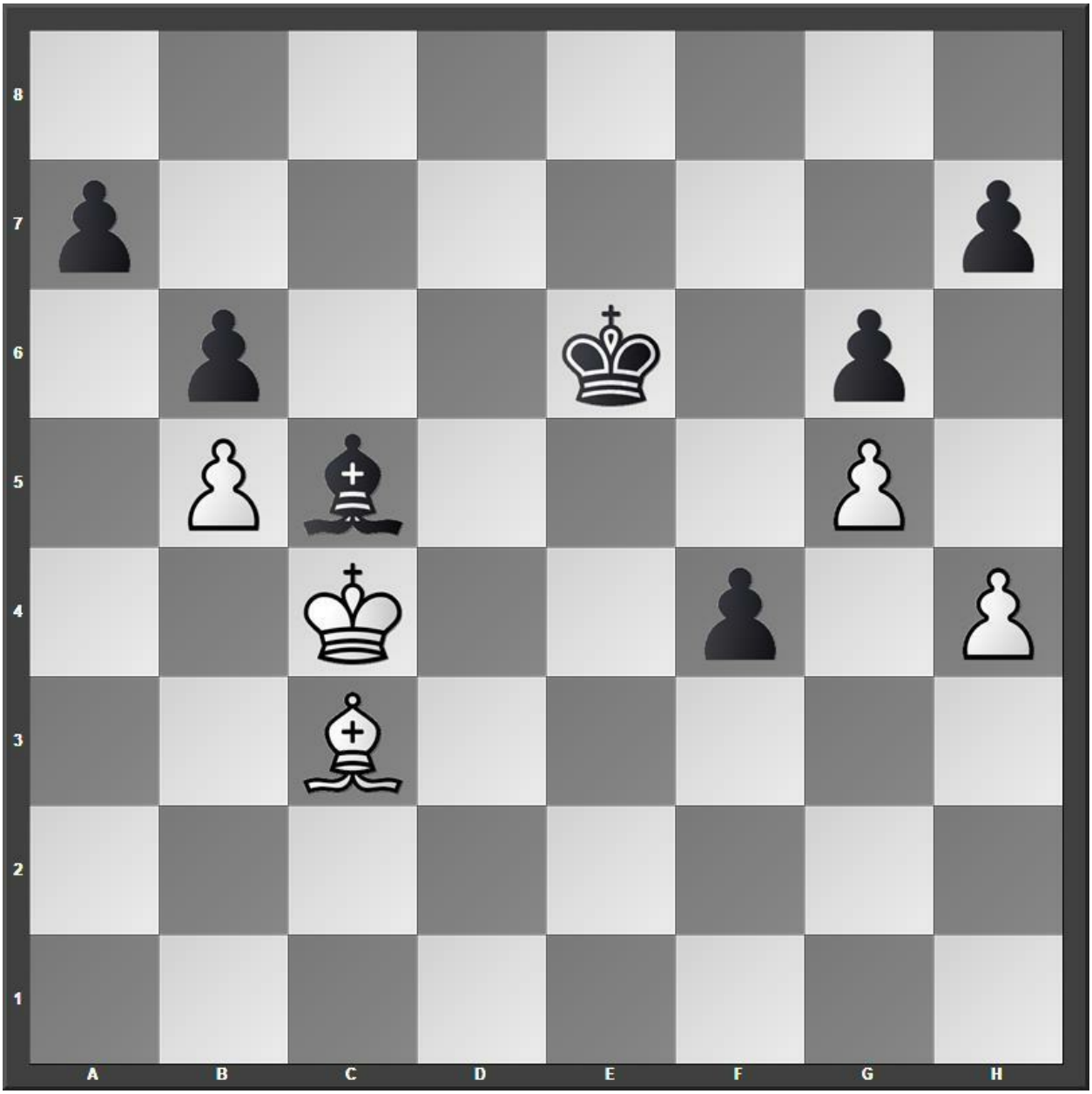
**34.Kf3 Rd3+**

**35.Re3 Rxe3+**

**36.Kxe3 Ke6**

**37.Kd4 Bc5+**

**38.Kc4 f4 0–1**



White resigns

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